

PIONEER PITH

The Gist of Lectures on

RATIONALISM

BY

ROBERT C. ADAMS

President of the

Montreal Pioneer Freethought Club

Author of "Travels in Faith from Tradition to Reason"
"Evolution: A Summary of Evidence"

NEW YORK

THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY

28 LAFAYETTE PLACE



THE TRUTH SEEKER,

THE LEADING FREETHOUGHT JOURNAL OF
THE WORLD.

LARGEST, CHEAPEST, AND BEST.

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY AT \$3.00 PER
YEAR; \$1.50 FOR SIX MONTHS.

SAMPLE COPIES FREE.

28 LAFAYETTE PLACE, NEW YORK CITY.

Among the reforms THE TRUTH SEEKER aims to effect are:

Total separation of church and state, including the equitable taxation of church property; secularization of the public schools, abolition of Sunday laws, abolition of chaplaincies, prohibition of public appropriations for religious purposes, and all other measures necessary to the same general end.

Its sixteen large pages are filled every week with scientific, philosophic, and Freethought articles and communications by the ablest Free-thinkers in the country. It gives all the Liberal news and keeps its readers posted on current secular and theological events. It is the armory from which hundreds draw their weapons in contests with priesthood. All the Liberal papers are good, but THE TRUTH SEEKER is *THE BEST AND LARGEST*. It is conducted in a broad and truly Liberal spirit, and gives everyone a hearing upon all subjects pertaining to the welfare of the human race.

OPINIONS REGARDING IT.

A paper like THE TRUTH SEEKER is something more and better than an advocate of truth. Through it its subscribers touch elbows with each other. Each reader knows that he is one of a goodly company who find comfort and inspiration in its pages. If they should meet each other they would feel like brothers and sisters. They have lived under one intellectual roof, felt the glow of the same fireside, and broken together the bread of life. Such a paper is to thousands a substitute for the church.—GEORGE CHAINEY, in *This World*.

THE TRUTH SEEKER, founded by D. M. Bennett, is to-day perhaps the strongest foe with which superstition has to contend, and a long future of great usefulness is, we trust and believe, before it.—*Winsted, Conn., Press*.

There ought to be five hundred subscribers to THE TRUTH SEEKER in this county, just to rebuke the infamous church bigots who are using force and fraud to suppress Liberalism.—*Worthington, Minn., Advance*.

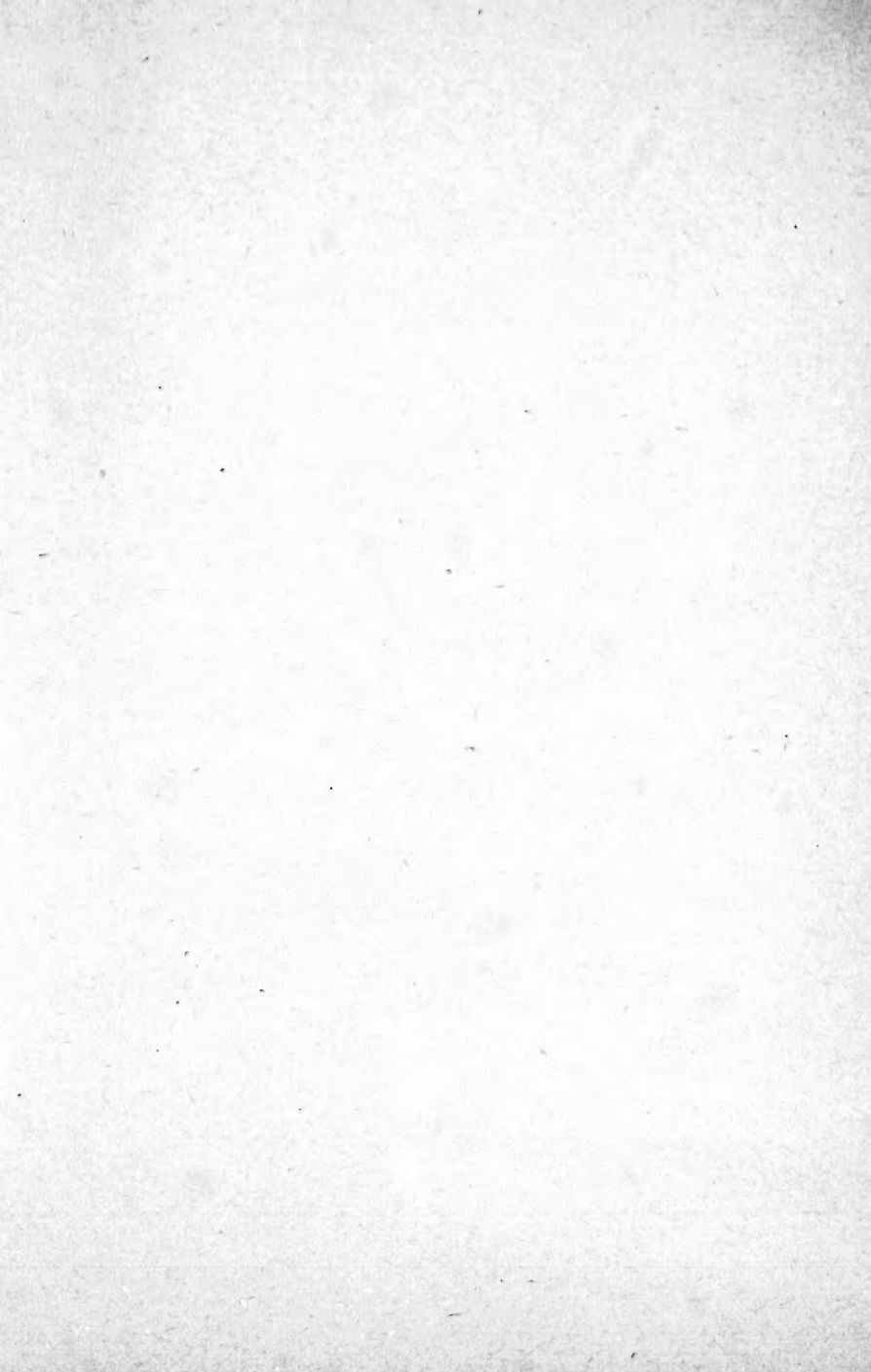
This sterling and widely-circulated Freethought journal has won its way deep into the hearts of its readers. THE TRUTH SEEKER is a great paper and deserves the most generous support of the Liberal public. The recent numbers received are splendid in every respect.—*San Francisco Universe*.

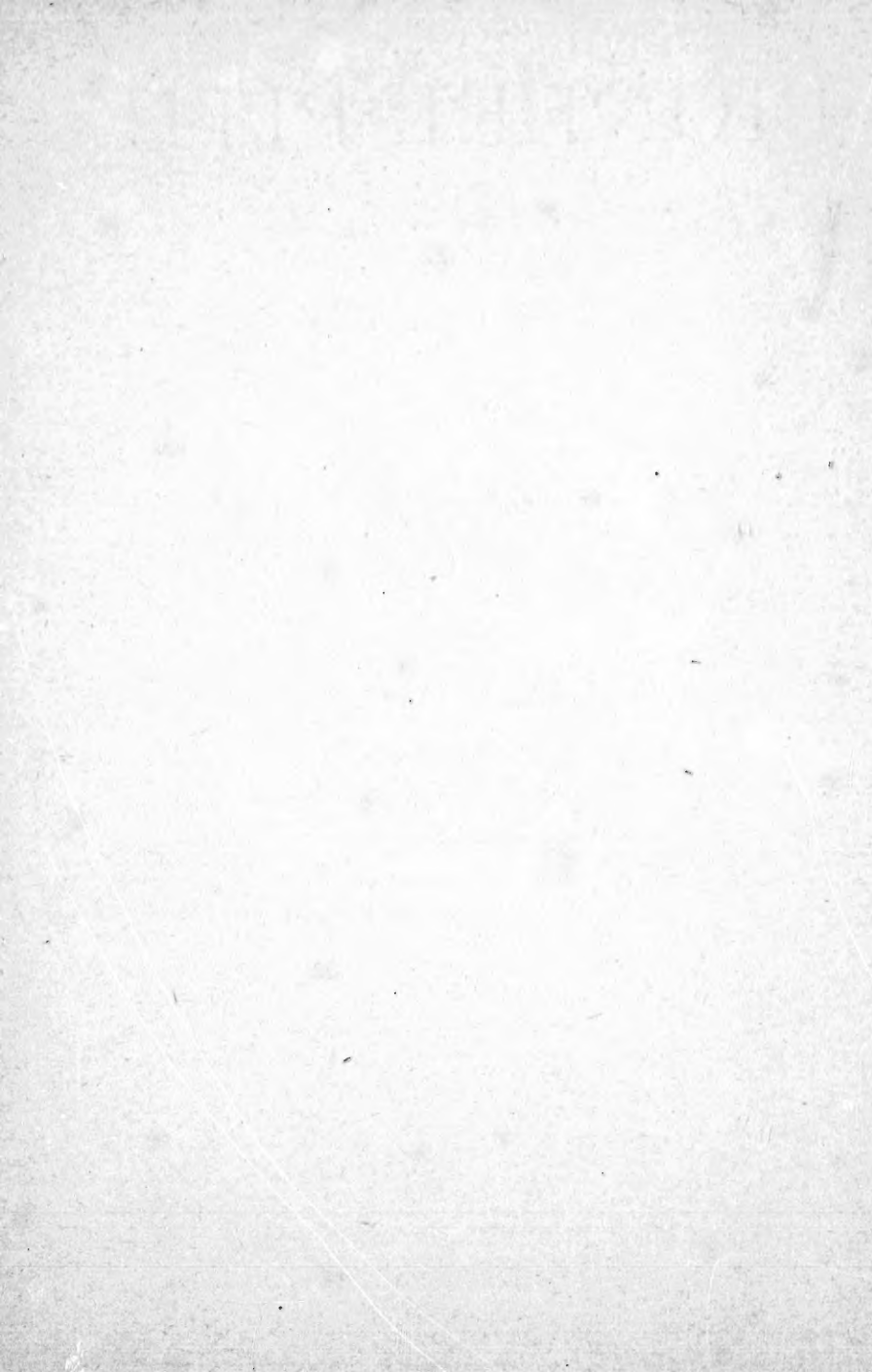
THE TRUTH SEEKER has gathered its resources, and will be a stronger, better, and brighter paper than ever.—*Liberal League Man*.

THE TRUTH SEEKER has become a necessity to the Liberal cause.—*Kansas Blade*.

Address THE TRUTH SEEKER,

28 Lafayette Place, New York City.





PIONEER PITH

THE

GIST OF LECTURES

ON

RATIONALISM

BY

ROBERT C. ADAMS

PRESIDENT OF THE

MONTREAL PIONEER FREETHOUGHT CLUB

AUTHOR OF

"TRAVELS IN FAITH FROM TRADITION TO REASON"

"EVOLUTION: A SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE"



NEW YORK

THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY

28 LAFAYETTE PLACE

Copyrighted, 1889,
BY
THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY.

BT
1210
A3

15

B. Q. R.
NO. 233

CONTENTS.

PIONEER PITH,	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
EVOLUTION,	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
• THE PRINCIPLES OF LIBERALISM,	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
THE HISTORY OF RELIGION,	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
HEBREW MYTHOLOGY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
THE PAGAN ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
MODERN CRITICISM OF THE BIBLE,	-	-	-	-	-	-	36
PROPHECY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS,	-	-	-	-	-	-	48
CREEDS,	-	-	-	-	-	-	53
RELIGION—IS IT PERMANENT?	-	-	-	-	-	-	57
THEISM AND ATHEISM,	-	-	-	-	-	-	61
THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF MORALITY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	68
THE PROMOTION OF MORALITY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	73
SABBATH OBSERVANCE,	-	-	-	-	-	-	77
ANCIENT MORALITY,	-	-	-	-	-	-	82
WHAT HAVE UNBELIEVERS DONE FOR THE WORLD?	-	-	-	-	-	-	85
CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION,	-	-	-	-	-	-	92
THE SECULAR NEW YEAR,	-	-	-	-	-	-	96

PIONEER PITH.

WHAT men want nowadays is *pith*; the marrow, kernel, substance, bottom fact, bed-rock truth. Condensed thought is in demand; for knowledge is so vast and time so short, that only a few can grasp any great bulk of the treasures of learning. Specialists must master every detail in their several departments of study, but the pith of their conclusions must be extracted and diffused to promote general intelligence.

The facts to be first presented should be the *pioneer* truths, which, as the word signifies, must go before to remove obstructions and prepare the way for human advance in the path of progress. The first essential to efficient action is a right conception of the order of the universe. Work cannot be well done, unless the conditions that control its performance are understood. The engineer must know the laws of steam. Man needs to know the laws that control his being. All religions, therefore, depend upon a cosmogony, a theory as to the origin and nature of the world.

The Christian religion presents a theory of existence founded on miracle and supernatural powers. To deliver men from bondage to these erroneous ideas, and from subjection to those who live by their

perpetuation, they must be given the pith of radical ideas.

The pioneer pith of Rationalism is the fact that the universe is controled by natural laws, and develops by uninterrupted successions of cause and effect; no arbitrary supernatural will ever interferes. Once grasp the idea,

Nature never nods,
Nor leaves her work to gods,

and all the dogmas of theology will be cast off. Teach men that connected causes produce all results, and the ground is cleared of the rubbish of faith and is ready for the plowshare of reason and the seed of knowledge. Whatever happens,

The only cause
Is nature's laws.

Nobody knows how nature's laws originated, or, if they had a beginning, how they started. But, if there was a starter, there is no evidence that he ever interferes with their working, nor is there any answer to the question, Who started the starter? Science has proved that orderly evolution is the law of the universe. It therefore follows that this world was not made suddenly by the word of a god, nor was man made out of the dust; no serpent tempted man to fall, and he needs no atonement; no revelation was ever given by a being superior to man, but all knowledge has been gained by man's own study of nature; no miracle ever happened, and no prayer to supernatural powers was ever answered; no savior was born of a virgin; no one ever rose from the dead.

Put this pith of natural law into every man's mind and slavery will cease. No longer will man be the victim of beliefs about gods, angels, and devils, and be the prey of those who thrive by his bondage. All the dogmatic structures of religion will crumble, the mazes of theology will be made straight, the multifarious creeds will be abandoned, and the emancipated Christian will adopt

THE PITHY CREED OF RATIONALISM.

Jehovah ranks with Jupiter ;
The Bible's Hebrew literature ;
Confucius, Jesus, both were men ;
A future life's beyond our ken.

A miracle do not expect ;
Seek nature's cause for each effect.
From man have come all gods and creeds ;
Your only savior is your deeds.

EVOLUTION.

EVOLUTION is the theory that all the varied details of the universe are the result of a gradual development from simpler conditions, through the working of the laws of nature which now surround us. Worlds, minerals, plants, animals, man, language, morals, laws, literature, arts and sciences, as they exist to-day, are the outcome of the unceasing successions of cause and effect that have taken place, through the preceding ages, in accordance with natural law.

But the term as popularly used refers more especially to life, and in this sense Evolution is the theory that all existing forms of life have been produced from simpler forms by a gradual process of change. Instead of an unchangeable universe, originated by special creation, the Evolutionist, seeing constant variation in each kind or species of plants and animals, has learned that these variations may increase, until, in a long course of natural descent, forms are produced that appear to be distinct species. In the breeding of domestic animals and in the crossing of plants, such marked differences result in a short time, that it becomes certain that such variation continued through a long period would produce forms appearing to differ in kind from their ancestors.

It is therefore seen to be both possible and prob-

able that all existing forms of life have developed from a few simple forms, or even from one form, by slow processes of change continued through vast ages.

The great work of Darwin was to point out the main process through which the evolution of forms takes place. More organisms come into life than the means of subsistence can support. This leads to a struggle for existence. There is some variety in the forms of the individuals of each species of plants and animals, and those possessing the variations most suited to their conditions are enabled to survive, while those less adapted to the circumstances perish. This is called the survival of the fittest. These individuals reproduce in their offspring the variations that have benefited them, and new variations occur, those that are useful being perpetuated.

Thus there is a continual divergence from the parent stock, wherever there is a change of surrounding conditions that causes variations that are serviceable to existence. When these variations are long continued, they form new species. But where there is no change in the circumstances of life, and the means of existence are abundant, there is little or no change in the forms of life. This process, by which nature selects the forms best suited to their surroundings, is called by Darwin, NATURAL SELECTION.

To summarize the evidences, we find :

1. The Nebular Hypothesis—the formation of worlds from the moving “star dust”—agrees with all known facts concerning the solar system, and is accepted as the best explanation of the universe.

2. All the orders of the animal world show a connection, more or less complete, by which an ascending tree of life spreads out from a common root.

3. All the classes of the vegetable kingdom are likewise allied by a continuous succession of forms.

4. Animal and vegetable life meet in the lowest forms and suggest a common origin.

5. All vegetable and animal life originate in cells of protoplasm which, to all appearance, are alike.

6. Every animal before reaching its adult form passes through forms common to the races below it. These changes occur either wholly before birth, as in the case of quadrupeds and man, or partly after birth, as with frogs and butterflies. The only intelligible way of accounting for this development of individuals, is to suppose that the races to which they belong have developed in a similar manner from lower orders, and the history of their descent is repeated in the history of each individual. "Development repeats descent."

7. Animals and plants have rudiments of organs which are useless, and in some cases disappear in adult life. This can only be explained by the supposition that these forms are inherited from ancestors who possessed them fully developed.

8. Change of surroundings causes change in the organs of animals, in consequence of the survival of those who possess any peculiarity that makes them better fitted to endure the changes, and these peculiarities become fixed in their descendants.

9. These changes of surroundings sometimes lead animals to revert to the forms of lower organisms, making it probable that their race formerly arose

from those forms through the influence of changed conditions, which ceasing, the new forms are no longer useful and disappear.

10. The mimicry by animals of resemblances that are useful, shows that new species may arise by the perpetuation of useful variations of form or color.

11. The distribution of animals and plants over the earth shows that natural causes account for the presence of each kind in its locality.

12. The study of fossil remains of plants and animals reveals links between orders so separate that they have been regarded as special creations. But these intermediate forms show the transition from one species to another.

13. In the oldest rocks the lowest forms of life are found, and higher forms appear successively in later deposits, the highest creature—man—being found in the latest strata, proving that the series of forms that we now observe in existing life have been gradually developed in the same ascending series during the vast periods of the past.

14. The development of mind is traced upward from the lowest instincts, as truly as is the development of organic forms from simpler organisms, showing no need for the theory of the special creation of man's reasoning powers.

15. The study of languages reveals an orderly, gradual development of speech, corresponding to the growth of forms of life.

16. Moral sentiments have unfolded in animals and man by a process of development, similar to what is observed in organic forms.

17. There is no evidence that any thing has sud-

denly come into existence in a completely developed form of varied structure. It is probable that the lowest and simplest form of life is the result of the combination of particles of matter by their own inherent energy, and that all subsequent developments have arisen from progressive changes that occurred in accordance with the same laws of nature that surround us to-day.

18. Finally, one of the principal causes of these progressive changes is observed to be the struggle for existence, which secures the survival of the fittest, or Natural Selection.

The idea of the special creation of the world by divine fiat, as described in the book of Genesis, has been abandoned in favor of the theory of Evolution by nearly all learned men. Professor Huxley says, in "The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin," "I do not think that there is a single zoologist, or botanist, or paleontologist among the multitude of active workers of this generation who is other than an Evolutionist, profoundly influenced by Darwin's views."

PRINCIPLES OF LIBERALISM.

IN the multitude of disputes about religious dogmas, people lose sight of the essential difference in the standpoints of Liberalism and orthodox Christianity. The whole question in dispute can be narrowed down to this, Is the universe ordered by the present conscious will of a supreme being, or does the universe proceed in its development by an orderly succession of cause and effect? The contest is between miracle and natural law. If God ordains and directs each event, we can believe in miracles, revelations, and the power of prayer. But if no one interferes with the orderly evolution of nature, we need only concern ourselves with learning her method of development. Instead of prayer for rain, we shall study meteorology; instead of healing by faith, we shall study hygiene; instead of worship, we shall employ research.

Liberalism is founded on this belief in the inviolability of nature's order and the right of free inquiry concerning it. The establishment of the theory of Evolution has settled nature's order; and human progress in the last century has shown the benefit of free inquiry. These results are so widely accepted that the church is trying to find a way to adopt them and preserve her organization, for they are seen to be fatal to her existence. The method generally

chosen is that portrayed in Professor Drummond's book, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," which shows that supernatural doctrines are constructed upon the same lines as natural facts, and therefore, it is claimed, may be deemed true. But the weakness of the position consists in begging the question by assuming that there is a spiritual world; and the assertion that religious dogmas are counterparts of what men perceive in nature, only illustrates the truth which Liberalism insists on, that men have made religion. Of course, they would make it after familiar models, and must create an unseen world after the pattern of the seen.

The great protest of Liberalism is against this concern with the unknown. We find vast organizations, institutions for theological learning, churches and councils, all engaged in investigating the duration of a hell that never existed, the nature of an atonement that never was made, the composition of a trinity that nobody knows of, and the welfare of souls which are only an assumption. The dispute of the schoolmen as to how many angels could stand on the point of a cambric needle is no more foolish and unprofitable. Here is nature just bursting forth with her secrets. Here are steam, electricity, chemistry, invention, and economic questions pressing for solution, demanding all the brain of the world, while social questions call for its heart. Liberalism protests against this waste of treasure and effort upon the propagation of theological ideas, while natural science and economics are neglected.

A common charge against Liberalism is, that it is destructive and not constructive. A sailor was asked,

"What is meant by humbugging?" He replied, "It is sawing wood with a hammer." If you take the hammer away and give the man a saw, he may, in ignorance, declare you have hindered his work, whereas you have taken away the tool with which he was wasting his time and have given him the means of construction. That is what Liberalism does. It sees men trying to advance the world by belief in miraculous help, and it destroys that idea and teaches men to depend on themselves and look for natural results. It tells men to throw away the old hammers of prayer, pilgrimage, and penance, and take the saws of learning, labor, and liberty. Orthodoxy is concerned for the glory of God, Liberalism strives for the uplifting of man.

All progress arises from Naturalism. Prayer and processions have been vainly tried against small-pox and floods, but isolation checked the epidemic and dykes restrained the waters.

Liberalism was defined by Prof. W. K. Clifford as "organized common sense," and that is truly its essence. Let any one depend on natural means and use common sense, and he is a Liberal, no matter by what name he is called. Common sense in this age does not trust in miracles. The mission of Liberalism is to teach self-reliance in place of divine pauperism.

THE HISTORY OF RELIGION.

A NEW science has lately arisen—the comparison of religions. It is new, because the opinion has prevailed that Christianity is the only true religion and came from God, while all other religions are false and came from the devil. These last were therefore unworthy of notice.

The doctrine of Evolution having shown the probability of the gradual development of all existing forms of life from lower orders, analogy suggested that all social customs and beliefs had likewise developed in accordance with the same laws of nature. As the special creation of man was disproved, so the special revelation of one true religion was overthrown, and it was seen that the existing religions have been gradually developed from earlier faiths, and are all, therefore, deserving objects of study.

There are three principal methods of research into past religion—the study of written history, observation of existing races of men, and the study of language. History permits the comparison of the ideas of different eras. Observation of savage races suggests what may have been the primitive religious beliefs of man, and the study of the ideas of men in higher states of civilization suggests the manner in which religions have grown. Customs and ideas are

recorded in words, just as fossils are preserved in the rocks; and skilful scholars like Max Müller, George Smith, Rawlinson, and others, have unfolded histories of extinct races by the study of cuneiform and hieroglyphic writings, and by tracing in modern speech the roots derived from ancient languages.

The oldest people that can be traced are the Turanians, known only by caves and gravel relics. The oldest civilization comes from them or from a closely allied race represented by the Akkadians in Mesopotamia, who gave their traditions to their successors in Babylon. The Aryans succeeded the Turanians in Central Asia; and all Europeans, except Finns, Magyars, and Turks, have sprung from this race. Their religion was nature-worship or animism. Their chief god was *Dyaus*, the sky, which became in India *Dyaus-pitar*, heaven-father; in Greece, *Zeus-pater*; and in Rome *Jupiter*. Their rites advanced from sacrifices to thanksgivings and sin-offerings, showing a gradual development from fear to love and conscience. Altars were revered, temples were built over them, priests were ordained to relieve the people from the burdensome ritual, and thinking was finally left to them.

Descendants of the Aryans conquered the older settlers of India, who are now represented by Finns, Lapps, and Mongols. In the sacred books, the Vedas, can be traced the progress of religious ideas from the Aryan animism. Müller says, "We can follow in the Vedic hymns, step by step, the development which changes the sun into a creator, preserver, ruler, and rewarder of the world, in fact, into a divine or supreme being." He styles India "the birthplace of

religions" and the exemplar of their growth. First came a perception of the infinite, back of mountains, rivers, and sky : then henotheism, a belief in single equal deities ; then polytheism, or one supreme being over other deities ; then monotheism, one only god ; and lastly atheism, or a belief in only one existence manifested in the varied forms of the universe. The study of all races shows that this is the natural order of the development of religious ideas.

Religion in India assumed the form of Brahmanism, the worship of a trinity composed of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the conservator, and Sivah the destroyer of the world. About 900 B.C. Vishnu was incarnated in the form of Chrishna, who, according to Sir William Jones, was said to have been descended from a royal family, was born among herdsmen, and escaped from the tyrant Cansa, who destroyed the new-born males. He performed miracles, raised the dead, descended to the lowest regions, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and was followed by disciples who preached his doctrines. These resemblances between this legendary man-god and Jesus are striking.

Buddhism arose later as a revolt from the power of the priests, and bears the same relation to Brahmanism that Christianity does to Judaism. It also had its savior, Gautama Buddha, who was miraculously born, and at the age of about thirty started out as a reformer. He gave ten commandments, which include prohibitions of intoxicating drink, anger, hatred, and bitter language, idle and vain talk, envy, pride, revenge, malice, or desire of neighbors' death or misfortune. Brahmanism finally became

supreme by conquest, and Buddhism, being driven out of India, spread in the east of Asia. When the first Roman Catholic missionaries went to Thibet they found the Buddhist priests with shaven heads, kneeling to images, worshiping relics, wearing strings of beads, using bells and holy water, and hearing confessions. They declared that the devil had made a mockery of their faith, not realizing that they had reached one of the sources of their religion.

In Persia, religious ideas developed out of the Aryan faith, through the influence of Zoroaster, who is supposed to have lived about 1200 B.C. He taught the existence of two powers—good and evil, which became personified as god and devil—the immortality of the soul, heaven and hell, resurrection and judgment. His followers still believe in the coming of Sosiosh, a spiritually begotten savior, to redeem the world. The Jews during their captivity came under the influences of these ideas, and many of the doctrines of the Hebrew and Christian religions appear to have been derived from that source. Max Müller says, "If the battles of Marathon and Salamis had been lost and Greece had succumbed to Persia, the worship of Ormuzd might have become the religion of the whole civilized world." On such human causes does the acceptance of "revelation" depend.

In China, religion is traced back to the twelfth century before Christ, and shows elements of fetishism with worship of spirits. Its development seems to have been more rapid than in any other country, for it reached the atheistic stage in the time of Confucius, 500 B.C. Confucianism is now adhered to by

all the cultivated classes. It is rather a system of morality than a religion, as it avoids supernaturalism, and is in fact secularism. The more ignorant people indulge in various stages of supernatural belief, and profess either the Taouist or the Buddhist religion.

The religion of Egypt shows traces of animism, and a development of ideas is noticed, which were modified through conquests by Assyrians, Persians, and Greeks. But Egypt in return influenced the Hebrews and Phœnicians, and gave to Rome the worship of the virgin, the miraculous conception, and its style of god.

The history of the Hebrews shows a gradual advance through polytheism to monotheism, and an improvement in the character of their god Yahveh (Jehovah), as they learned the good traits of other gods and became more civilized themselves. After the captivity in Babylon Ezra organized Judaism, the priestly religion that grew out of the Mosaism of the prophets, and, under the influence of Greek philosophy and humanity and oriental doctrines, Christianity naturally evolved, and, through Rome's universal sovereignty, gained its sway. Its rival, Mohammedanism, being better suited to the genius and mental condition of the southern races, has established supremacy in many countries and is now spreading rapidly over Africa.

A study of the religions of Greece, Rome, Scandinavia, and America reveals the same law of mental progress. Each religion takes on the characteristics of the people. The joyous negro has a poetic mythology, the gloomy Indian a more somber one; the

pastoral races have a mild theology, and the warlike races a cruel one. It is clear that each people makes its own god and creed according to its requirements. Spencer shows that a savage man needs a savage god. The Christian fathers, who thought one of the delights of heaven would be the contemplation of the torments of the damned, needed a severe god to keep them in order. All are "good for their times and places." "Though bad in the abstract, they are relatively good—are the best which the then existing conditions admit."

A survey of the religions of the world shows their connected development and their equally human origin. The race has progressed as a child progresses. Most of the dogmas of religion and the myths and fairy tales of all peoples, can be traced back to stories suggested in the childhood of the human race by observation of the phenomena of nature, the contest between light and darkness and the struggle between good and evil. Cinderella is the dawn-maiden pursued by the sun-god. Jack the Giant Killer, William Tell, and most of the nursery-tale heroes are traced back to the old Aryan sun-myths. As the child's mind advances out of belief in fairy tales, so has the race grown in religious ideas according to its education and civilization.

These facts should teach us toleration, for anger and malice toward earlier stages of growth are absurd and impolitic. They should give us hope; for, if religion has advanced, or rather improved, for religion in the sense of the worship of supernatural powers steadily declines as races progress, we may hope for the extinction of supernatural beliefs. Im-

provements always being possible, we have a stimulus each to add his mite toward the uplifting of the human race above the childish fancies that hinder its mature development.

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE Christian religion is founded upon the alleged life, death, and resurrection of a person called Jesus the Christ, or anointed. So far as we are aware, no eye-witness of his existence has ever recorded the fact; and the only testimony that we possess as to his life is contained in four gospels, which were probably compiled about one hundred and fifty years after his death. By comparing the points upon which the first three gospels agree, a "triple tradition" is obtained, which is considered to be the nearest approach to an accurate account of what was believed about him in his own time. This shows him to have been an earnest preacher of righteousness, of natural birth, who was believed to have wrought some miracles common to all the religions of that era. He was put to death, and never rose again. He taught nothing new, but in the sayings attributed to him are summarized much of the ethical teaching of the past. After his death legends grew around his simple story; Paul added dogmas to the moral creed of Jesus, and founded Christianity, a religion which since then has constantly increased its doctrines; the latest one, papal infallibility, having been added in 1870; thirty-four councils having met during these ages to settle beliefs.

The early Christian fathers, who developed and added to the doctrines of Paul, though devout, were mostly ignorant and credulous men. They could not be trusted in controversial matters, for their zeal often triumphed over truth and honesty.

The new religion spread by means of the earnestness of its teachers, its high morality, and its fitness to the age. But its final establishment was due to the emperor Constantine, who, though a monster of depravity, for politic reasons made Christianity the state religion in the early part of the fourth century. Through wars, massacres, and missions the system has extended over the known world.

For centuries dissensions have raged about the nature of Christ and many other dogmas, and as to the books that should compose the sacred canon. Some of these questions were settled by votes, and others by blood. Ceremonies and holy days were established, saints were created, images were adored, relics became precious, and miracles were proclaimed. For three hundred years during "the dark ages" ignorance and credulity reigned supreme.

Rivalry existed among the church dignitaries, but the bishops of Rome became the most powerful, and in the fifth century Leo became the first pope. In the eleventh century Gregory VII. established the supremacy of the popes over the civil powers, declaring the pope to be the sun and the king the moon. He also instituted the celibacy of the priests. The patriarchs of Constantinople had many dissensions with the popes of Rome, and in the eleventh century the Eastern and Western divisions finally separated—the former being since known as the Greek church.

In the eleventh century fanatical crusades were undertaken to gain possession of the holy sepulcher at Jerusalem. Seven million lives were lost, and the principal gains were an increase of knowledge, extension of commerce, and respect for "infidels."

In the twelfth century reason began to combat the current religion, but heresy was crushed by persecution, and for four hundred years Europe was deluged with blood by religious wars. The massacres of the Waldenses and Huguenots, the tortures of the Inquisition, the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, the Hussite wars, slaughter in the Netherlands, and other atrocities destroyed the most intelligent people of the times and delayed the advance of civilization.

In the fifteenth century the printing-press began its work of education, and early in the next century Martin Luther voiced the growing sentiment in favor of free thought—the right of private judgment. Through many vicissitudes this principle has spread, and the writings of rationalists in Germany, France, England, and America have brought the Protestant church steadily away from Catholic Christianity toward the goal to which it is destined—the adoption of reason as the only guide. The alternative is trust in authority. This the church of Rome still maintains; and it is doubtless the only basis upon which belief in unprovable things can be preserved. Protestants who cannot be freethinkers will drift back to the historic church of Christianity. The conflict of the future will be between Rome and reason, the church and freethought.

The history of Christianity shows that, like all religions, its origin and growth are purely human.

It has contributed some beneficial effects, but its exaltation of belief over morality and its opposition to science have been injurious. Its crimes and cruelties show man's barbarous nature, which knowledge and experience are slowly refining. It is to be regarded as a system rather than as a doctrine, for, like Proteus, it changes its forms, and whenever defeated in attack, if policy so dictates, it adopts the proved ideas of its assailants, and thus preserves its organization, which is more essential to its official supporters than are its dogmas. These are abandoned or changed whenever expediency dictates, making aggressive effort very difficult; for whenever a point is successfully assailed, it is declared to be "unessential," or else not to belong to *true* Christianity. Everything is abandoned but natural morality, and still men call themselves Christians and support the system which has no excuse for continuance unless miracle and revelation are facts. When rationalists see the duty of consistency, they will cease to uphold a system which has no logical existence apart from supernaturalism.

HEBREW MYTHOLOGY.

IN its early days every race has invented myths or fables to explain the mysteries of nature. Tylor says a myth is the savage way of satisfying scientific curiosity. Müller traces their growth by the applications of names of deities to natural objects, as when the sun pursuing the dawn is personified as Apollo pursuing Daphne. Lang and other writers show that these myths are of world-wide extent, and that similar stories prevail amidst widely different languages. Savages regard all objects as personal and allied to themselves. Uncle Remus extends his faculties to "Brer Rabbit." Fabulous stories naturally arise from this habit of mind.

The Old Testament contains many wonderful narrations, which are paralleled in the literature of all nations. The creation of the world is said in Persian legend to have been divided into six parts by Ormuzd, and on the sixth day he made Adama and Evah, who were tempted by a serpent and fell. The Babylonians had this legend fifteen hundred years before the Hebrews heard of it. The Hindoos and Egyptians had legends of the Tree of Life; and in China, Madagascar, Scandinavia, and Mexico similar stories have prevailed. The deluge story is common to all lands, and arose from freshets, eruptions, and subsi-

dences of the earth. The sacrifice of Isaac corresponds to the tales of the Hindoos and Greeks, all doubtless composed to discourage human sacrifices. Jacob's ladder expresses the belief in the transmigration of souls, the Egyptians having pigs and monkeys on their ladders to represent wicked men. The stone pillar was a phallic emblem of the reproductive powers of nature. The marvels of the Exodus are equaled in the feats of Bacchus, who changed his rod into a serpent and crossed the Red Sea with an army dryshod. He divided the waters of the rivers Orontes and Hydaspus, drew water from a rock, and in other ways did deeds ascribed to Moses. All nations have had revelations on mountains, and Buddha's ten commandments are in some respects superior to those of Moses. Samson is a counterpart of Hercules and the Babylonian hero Izdubar. Samson is the Arabic word for sun, and the story represents the struggle of the sun for six months with mist and darkness. Jonah is also a name for the sun, which was fabled to be swallowed by night for three days at the winter solstice, December 22d to 25th. Hercules was swallowed by a whale at Joppa, and retained three days. Numerous heroes have had the same experience, and Little Red Riding Hood, who was swallowed by the wolf, represents the same natural event, the sun's conquest by night. Joshua had many imitators in stopping the sun, and one of Buddha's disciples cut the moon in two. Parallels to Elijah's ascent in the chariot, David and Goliath, Balaam's ass, the confusion of tongues, in fact all the incidents of Hebrew narra-

tion, are met with in the mythologies and legends of other nations.

Christians have maintained that the Bible stories are true, but all others are imitations, and prove the genuineness of the Hebrew tales as a counterfeit proves the existence of a genuine coin. But it has been conclusively shown that many of these legends were borrowed from other nations by the Hebrews and were not first revealed to them. George Smith found cuneiform inscriptions made two thousand years before Christ, which prove that the Babylonians then possessed ancient legends of the creation fuller in some respects than those of the Hebrews. Many of these stories were unknown to the Hebrews before the captivity and were learned in exile. Max Müller says, "The opinion that the pagan religions were mere corruptions of the religion of the Old Testament, is now as completely surrendered as the attempt of explaining Greek and Latin as the corruptions of Hebrew." The writings of Müller, Baring-Gould, John Fiske, Andrew Lang, the compilations of the author of "Bible Myths," and numerous others have established the opinion that the Old Testament stories are either borrowed from other literature, or are the mythical explanations of nature's marvels such as are invented by all savage or unenlightened people. This view is so generally accepted that the articles in the standard encyclopedias are based upon it, and there is no longer controversy upon the subject among scholars; and yet we have the astounding fact that in churches and Sunday-schools these fables are taught as truths. Who is responsible for keeping the people in this ignorance? Do

not the ministers know these things, and can they justify their silence by the plea that the people are not able to bear the light of knowledge? Is not falsehood always injurious to those who entertain it, and is not deception ever degrading to those who practice it? Mankind are perishing for lack of knowledge of natural laws, and yet one day in seven is devoted to teaching them fables that originated in the childhood of the world, and that the learning and common sense of the unbiased, educated mind have outgrown.

THE PAGAN ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY is not a revelation, but it is a development, having its roots in the religious soil of early pagan ideas. Renan says: "Nearly everything in Christianity is mere baggage brought from the pagan mysteries." Its central idea is that God became man in the person of Jesus Christ; but the dogma of incarnation is common to all nations, and was believed long before the Christian era. The author of "Bible Myths" mentions forty-eight persons born of virgins; and Kersey Graves has written the stories of "Sixteen Crucified Saviors." In India, 900 B.C., Chrishna was born of the virgin Devaki, and, 500 B.C., Buddha was born of the virgin Maya. In Egypt, Horus and his virgin mother, Isis, were worshiped long before the time of Christ; and their black images and pictures were adopted in Romish churches to represent Jesus and Mary. Justin Martyr (A.D. 140), in his apology to the Emperor Adrian, says: "As to his (Jesus Christ) having been born of a virgin, you have your Perseus to balance that."

The history of the man-gods is very similar. They were usually born on Christmas day, in caves or humble places, when the mother was on a journey. The heavenly bodies gave signs of their birth; they were visited by wise men, pursued by a king, and

tempted by the devil. They worked miracles, died and rose again, and were to return and reform the world.

Modern Christians have claimed that these stories arose after the time of Jesus and were distortions of his true life. But the early Christian fathers knew better, and claimed that Satan had stolen God's designs and made spurious issues in advance. Hence the saying, "The devil has his Christs." Modern scholarship has demonstrated the priority of many of these stories to the story of Jesus.

The doctrine of the trinity was held by the Brahmans, who worshiped Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, and by the Buddhists, who revered "the three pure, precious, and honorable Fo" (Buddha). The term Logos, or Word, was applied to Apollo; and the Holy Ghost is symbolized by the dove of Venus.

The sacrament of bread and wine was observed in honor of Osiris, the risen god of ancient Egypt, and of Mithra, the Persian savior. The Greeks said that Ceres gave flesh to eat and Bacchus blood to drink.

Baptism was a universal custom. Buddhists dipped three times and Brahmans sprinkled. Persians dipped to Mithra and marked adults with the sign of the cross. Confirmation at the age of fifteen was also practiced by the ancient Persians.

The cross is a world-wide symbol of vast antiquity, probably originating as a phallic emblem, a symbol of the male generative organs. In the museum of London University there is a mummy with a cross on its breast. An ancient race in North Italy revered the cross a thousand years before Christ. The sign of the cross that Constantine saw in vision was the

monogram of Osiris and Jupiter Ammon. I. H. S. was the monogram of Bacchus.

Festivals to saints and martyrs replaced pagan festivals. Faustus wrote to St. Augustine: "Nothing distinguishes you from the pagans, except that you hold your assemblies apart from them." St. Gregory, bishop of Neo-Cæsarea A.D. 240, was commended by Gregory of Nyassa for changing the pagan festivals into Christian holidays, the better to draw the heathen to the religion of Christ. The 25th of March, observed by Greeks and Romans in honor of the mother of the gods, is now Lady Day, and the festival of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is held on the day of the festival of the blessed virgin Juno. Christmas was the birthday of the gods, and was the ancient feast of the sun, that then returns after the winter solstice. Our manner of observing it was condemned by Tertullian, A.D. 200, who said it was "rank idolatry" to deck doors with "garlands or flowers on festival days according to the custom of the heathen."

The fish is an emblem of deity. Dag is Hebrew for fish, and Dagon was a fish god. The fish was sacred to Venus, and was eaten on Friday in her honor, as it now is devoted to Jesus.

Good Friday and Easter were observed in honor of Adonis, and Easter takes its name from the Saxon goddess Ostara, whose festival was observed on that day.

All the doctrines that are deemed essential to Christianity are the outgrowths of earlier beliefs. Atonement was made not only by animals, but by men and gods. The title mediator was applied to

Mithra in Persia. Regeneration, or being born again, was symbolized by a person passing through clefts in rocks, as though born out of the earth. The end of the world, the day of judgment, and future punishment were matters of belief in remote times.

Religion, beginning, perhaps, with Nature worship or sun worship, has gradually evolved its existing forms; and the evolution of religion is now as clearly established as is the evolution of all other characteristics of life and of the universe. The same laws have controlled the development of all. There has been neither miracle nor revelation, but natural selection and the survival of the fittest have determined the form of beliefs as well as the development of natural objects.

The Essenes, a sect of advanced Pharisees, were probably the immediate originators of both Christianity and Mohammedanism. A branch called Therapeutæ held similar doctrines to those afterward adopted by Christians. The Rev. Robert Taylor wrote the "Diegesis," showing the origin of the Christian gospels and doctrines from Egyptian and other Oriental sources; and, having been imprisoned in England for it, he said: "Those who offer truth to the Christian community must ever provide for their escape for so doing."

The author of "Bible Myths" says at the close of his voluminous account of the correspondences between Christianity and paganism: "We have seen, then, that the only difference between Christianity and paganism is that Brahma, Ormuzd, Osiris, Zeus, Jupiter, etc., are called by another name; Chrishna, Buddha, Bacchus, Adonis, Mithras, etc., have been

turned into Jesus ; Venus's pigeons into the Holy Ghost ; Diana, Isis, Devaki, etc., into the Virgin Mary, and the demigods and heroes into saints. The exploits of the one are represented as the miracles of the other. Pagan festivals became Christian holidays, and pagan temples became Christian churches."

Every Christian doctrine, rite, and symbol can be shown to have preëxisted in pagan usage. Therefore they cannot have been revealed at the time of Christ. Christianity is thus proved to be an evolution out of older beliefs, and takes its place in the universal brotherhood of religions made by men. Books in large numbers may be found that tell these things, but the influence of the clergy prevents their being read. People should heed the advice of Buddha, "Do not believe merely on the authority of your teachers and masters, or believe and practice merely because they believed and practiced."

MODERN CRITICISM OF THE BIBLE.

CRITICISM is the art of pointing out the merits or defects of a production. Literary criticism—the analysis, comparison, and estimation of writings—has almost come to mean fault-finding, so keen has been the analysis. To this there is one marked exception. Concerning the Bible, only favorable criticism is tolerated. In the past, the dungeon, axe, and fagot, and in later times obloquy and social ostracism, have been reserved for the daring investigator who presumed to see aught but perfection in “the word of God.”

The demand for evidence, that proof shall precede belief, is now made even to the claims the church presents for the Bible, for, as Matthew Arnold says, “We must accept what is verified, not what is assumed.”

The spirit of modern criticism of the Bible is marked by reverence, fairness, and judicial calmness, and is in strong contrast to the antagonism shown by such writers as Paine, Voltaire, and their modern successors. It holds that the Bible can be studied like all other books, yet treated reverently; and those who write most destructively lavish praise whenever it is possible.

The method of modern criticism consists in schol-

arly research, in contrast with Paine's method of appealing to reason and common sense to show the absurdity of Bible statements. It studies the comparison of religions. It compares the sacred books of all nations. It studies folk-lore and traces the growth of similar fables in different climes. It makes minute examination of the text and history of the Bible, and analyzes its contents with the closeness and impartiality that pertain to the chemist's laboratory.

The results of modern criticism of the Bible establish the fact that the book contains a collection of Hebrew literature, fragmentary and of mixed and uncertain authorship, extending over a period of a thousand years. These writings, when compared with other sacred books and the histories of other people, show that the Hebrews claim descent from Terah, on the same principle that led the Greeks to trace descent from Hellen and the Romans from Romulus, and all are equally fabulous. Their religion was first fetishism, then the worship of various gods, and finally of their chief God Yahweh (Jehovah). Their history was preserved by oral tradition till about the end of the ninth century before Christ, five hundred years after the time of Moses. Then books began to be written, and were edited and re-edited, each editor altering or adding as he felt it desirable. The writing was in consonants, without vowels or punctuation, and different words could be made from the same letters. The manuscripts had to be copied by pen, and the writers were liable to mistakes.

The oldest manuscripts of the Old Testament now

extant were written in the ninth century A.D., but they probably do not differ much from those of the first century, when it is thought one standard reading was adopted, and the many varying copies were suppressed, just as Caliph Othman destroyed all copies of the Koran which diverged from the standard text that he had adopted.

Most of the books of the Bible are anonymous, and names of authors have been supplied. The Pentateuch, called the books of Moses, probably contains nothing written by Moses except the basis of the ten commandments. Samuel, David, and Elijah showed no knowledge of the laws of Leviticus, and no writer before the Babylonish captivity, 588 B.C., mentions Adam, Eden, the fall, or the flood. It is therefore clear that these things could not have become known at an earlier date. Robertson Smith says: "It is impossible that God laid down rules in the wilderness that had no part in Israel's history for one thousand years."

Two different stories of the creation are given in the first and second chapters of Genesis. Beautiful Sarah, who bewitched kings and caused Abraham to lie, was ninety years old; baby Ishmael was fifteen to twenty years old, and little Benjamin was the father of ten children. Conflicting stories of the flood are given, and many discrepancies and contradictions are noted. An explanation is found in the discovery that different documents have been interwoven; two of these are known as the Elohist and Jehovist, from the fact that one always speaks of God as Elohim and the other as Jehovah (Yahweh). These two writings are traced to the end of the book

of Joshua. Geographical names are mentioned which were not given to the places till long after Moses's death, and events are referred to not known for hundreds of years later.

There is good evidence that the Pentateuch was compiled in three parts: first, about 750 B.C., the Yahvist narrative beginning with Gen. ii, 4; second, about 620 B.C., a priest wrote Deuteronomy, and Josiah introduced it; third, after the return from captivity, about 444 B.C., Ezra rearranged the books and introduced Leviticus, drawn up by priests in Babylon.

Judges refers to the captivity, and that part of it certainly could not have been written earlier. The historical books show the writings of different periods. Samuel says Yahweh tempted David, but Chronicles says Satan tempted him. The latter was written after the captivity, when Satan had been remodeled after the Persian Ahriman. Most of the first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah were written about 740-710 B.C., but from the fortieth chapter we have writings later than the captivity, probably 545-530 B.C. Zechariah is thought to contain three different writings. The Psalms are a collection of poems extending over five hundred years; there are only a few that scholars agree in attributing to the authorship of David. Proverbs is a similar collection. The last written book of the Old Testament is Daniel, which is composite as to authorship and of different dates, but has parts not older than 165 B.C. It contains past events recorded under the guise of prophecy.

The oldest books are thought to be Song of Solo-

mon, Amos, Hosea, Zechariah ix-xi, Isaiah i-xxvii, and Micah.

The scribes collected all the approved writings into three books, the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms or Sacred Writings, but additions were occasionally made, and a number of books referred to in the Old Testament are lost.

The Babylonian captivity changed the Hebrew religious ideas greatly, driving out idolatrous notions and bringing in beliefs in angels, devils, the future life, judgment, and the resurrection. Then Greek influence became ascendant for two hundred years. Many Jews went to Alexandria, and Egyptian ideas were gained. Then came Rome's control, and out of these varying religions Christianity was born.

The books of the New Testament grew as did those of the Old. The earliest writings are some of Paul's epistles. After his death some one wrote Hebrews to exalt faith, and another writer produced James to uphold works. Revelation was probably written just before the fall of Jerusalem, to comfort Christians with the assurance of the speedy triumphant return of the crucified Messiah. As Jesus failed to return, traditions of his life were gathered, and four "Gospels" have been preserved. Some fifty Gospels, thirty-five books of Acts, and one hundred Epistles have been rejected, and more than fifty works of the second century, that would have thrown great light upon the New Testament, have mysteriously disappeared, probably destroyed by the sectarian zeal of the Christian Fathers.

The first clear mention of any of our Gospels was by Theophilus of Antioch, 180 A.D., who mentions

John's Gospels. Irenæus, about 200 A.D., first mentions the four Gospels. The author of "Supernatural Religion" examines every supposed quotation before 150 A.D., and shows that none agree exactly with our Gospels. It therefore is probable that they were not written in their present form till after that date.

It is found that the authors of the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke have evidently copied from some earlier record, and by writing out this triple tradition, in which they all agree, a story is given of Jesus as a purely human person, an enthusiastic prophet, who hoped to bring about the establishment of a kingdom of righteousness on earth. This story omits the genealogies, miraculous incarnation, the details of infancy, the greatest miracles, the resurrection, and ascension. To this narrative, tradition gradually added more marvelous incidents, and writers in the second century compiled the existing materials.

John's Gospel is supposed to be written by some one who had imbibed the Alexandrine doctrines of Philo, who taught that matter and God were eternal, and God worked on matter by powers, the highest of which was the *Logos*. This author borrowed the idea, and made Jesus the *Logos* or Word.

A controversy between Peter and Paul was continued and extended by factions after the death of the apostles, and each selected the writings supporting his views. Majorities in councils finally chose out a few writings to form the New Testament, and by degrees they came to be considered inspired. Some books were long in dispute. The present Catholic Bible was only settled by the Council of

Trent in the sixteenth century, and the Protestant canon was settled by the Westminster Assembly in the seventeenth century. We have no manuscript earlier than the fourth century, and only five earlier than the tenth century, A.D.

The comparison of religions, the study of folk-lore and of sacred books, reveal the fact that the miracles and dogmas of the Bible correspond to the beliefs of all other peoples, and the Hebrew religion and its writings take their place in the record of the orderly evolution of human ideas.

The results obtained completely overthrow the theory of verbal inspiration, for it would have been of no use unless the copyists had been inspired. Griesbach has noted 150,000 different readings in the manuscripts of the New Testament. Modern authors always read proof, and are we to suppose that God is less intelligent than man? If he gave an inspired message, would he not have revised the copies? He even neglected to keep his own name correct, for Yahweh was wrongly written Jehovah.

The theory of inspiration held by modern critics is this: That, as in the process of evolution the Greeks produced the best art and the Romans the best laws, so the Hebrews developed the best religious ideas; and we accept Greek statues, Roman laws, and Hebrew books upon their merits as the best of their kind, but differing from the works of other people only in degree, not in the nature of their origin. Renan says: "The Bible is more beautiful when we have learned to see therein, ranged in order on a canvas of a thousand years, each aspiration, each sigh, each prayer of the most exalted religious con-

sciousness that ever existed, than when we force ourselves to view it as a book unlike any other, composed, preserved, interpreted in direct opposition to all the ordinary rules of the human intellect."

Many of the greatest scholars of the world now hold the opinions referred to, but it is asked, if these things are true, why do we not hear them from our pulpits? Let an eminent orthodox minister answer. He wrote to a friend: "I do, without any concealment, declare that I do not believe the whole Bible to be true, that there are human additions and interpolations, that, in fact, Robertson Smith is right in the view he takes. Must I say all I think to the weak and stupid public—for such it is? I never say anything I *don't* believe. I only act on Christ's own principle, 'I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now.' Yes, God is afraid of upsetting weak minds, if Christ echoed the divine view of things in that statement." Consideration for the feeble minds of "the weak and stupid public" leads many ministers to withhold these results till the people, in their opinion, "are able to bear it."

We would not destroy the Bible, but we would destroy bibliolatry. We would rescue this valuable book from the bad use men have made of it, dishonoring to "God" and degrading to man. "We won't give up the Bible;" but on the shelf, where we place our choicest books, with Homer, Shakespeare, Macaulay, Emerson, Longfellow, there will we place this noble collection of Hebrew literature.

PROPHECY.

THE power to foretell future events has always been considered a proof of divine inspiration. The belief that the Bible writers have had this gift has been one of the strongest bulwarks of the claim that this book is the "Word of God." Alleged fulfilment of the prophecies concerning Jesus, the dispersion of the Jews, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the sway of the pope of Rome, have been among the strongest means of compelling faith, and have led to eager but fantastic efforts to discern the whole course of the future, wrapped up in the mystic visions of the holy seers, to be unfolded by any student who possessed the aid of the Holy Spirit. Vast arrays of learning, exercises of ingenious fancy, and amounts of time have been expended in these researches; and multitudes are still squandering precious opportunities in this matching of texts with past events and guesses at their application to things to come.

Modern scholarship joined with common sense has shown that every claimed fulfilment of Bible prophecy is fairly met by the explanation of coincidence, forgery, invention, or the correct date of the writings. The entire claim for the inspiration of the Bible on the score of its prophecies is completely overthrown by their examination. It requires no scholarship to trace the alleged prophecies of Christ; any one with

a reference Bible can do it, and will find that most of the prophecies have no reference to Jesus, or, where they seem to have such, the probability is that the event has been recorded so as to fit the prediction. Thomas Paine made a good "Examination of the passages in the New Testament, quoted from the Old, and called Prophecies of the coming of Jesus Christ." It is what every one can do for himself; so it may merely be said that the result is to show that no such prophecies exist, but that the passages quoted allude to other events transpiring in the times of the writers.

The book of Daniel has been the great treasure-house of prophecy-seekers. But all results are exploded by the now well-established fact that the story, which purports to deal with events occurring nearly six hundred years before Christ, was actually written, or compiled in its present form, between 168 and 164 B.C., and its prophecies refer to events then past, or to those transpiring in connection with the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes and the wars of the Maccabees. A few interpolations have been made by later hands. The book becomes intelligible viewed from this standpoint, and all its mystery is dispelled.

Prophecies of the Jews are disposed of by the discovery of the dates of the writings, which show that they were written after the event, or were merely guesses of events so near and probable that it required no wisdom to foretell them.

The book of Revelation is the storehouse for predictions against the pope, or for the coming of Christ, according as one belongs to the post-millen-

narian or pre-millennarian schools. So obscure is this "Divine Revelation," that Christians cannot agree as to whether it has been fulfilled in whole, in part, or not at all, there being earnest and learned advocates for each theory. An Andover professor once said to his students, "The study of the book of Revelation either finds or leaves a man crazy." So uncertain a revelation scarcely can be termed divine without serious implications against divinity. The genuineness and authenticity of this book have been in great dispute. It was said by early fathers to be a forgery of Cerinthus; for a thousand years it was not recognized by a majority of the Greek church, and it was opposed by Luther. The establishment of the date of its composition, and a study of the history of that time, make clear its intent. The book was probably written between 64 and 70 A.D. The first part between 64 and 68 A.D., when the temple was uninjured and Jerusalem standing, and the latter part between 68 and 70 A.D. It was written to console Christians in that time of persecution. The Anti-Christ was Nero, who was popularly supposed not to be dead, but to have escaped to Parthia. His return and destruction would introduce the millennium. The number of the beast, 666, applies as well to his name as to the hundred others with whom it has been connected. The book contains a veiled history of Nero and his times, and a prophecy of a millennium which failed of fulfilment.

If one would study Bible prophecies, let him first consult the most scholarly authorities as to the dates of the writings, then let him study the history of corresponding times, and see if events then past or

near at hand do not satisfactorily account for the subject-matter. The overthrow of belief in prophecy will put an end to a great waste of intellect, and allow the ingenious minds now wandering in the mazes of Oriental mysticism to devote their powers to the discovery of those secrets of nature which may be practically applied to the present welfare and advancement of mankind.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

THE resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of Christianity. Paul so taught, for he says: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain;" and such writers as Dean Mansel and Canon Farrar admit that in this instance "the entire Christian faith must stand or fall with our belief in the supernatural," and if it is not a fact, "then our religion has been founded upon an error." Nothing concerning Jesus need be deemed incredible if this event is proved. But proof is demanded. An excellent bishop says: "Here and there to-day there is a demand for proofs of religion—a wicked and adulterous generation seeking after a sign." This marks the distinction between superstition and science—one submits to authority, the other examines. Surely such a marvelous event should produce its evidence.

In vain do we search contemporaneous history: Philo, Josephus, Seneca, Pliny, Diogenes, Pausanias, Suetonius, and a dozen other writers of the first and second centuries, mention neither Jesus nor his resurrection. The early fathers felt this such a blow to their claims that they forged a passage in Josephus, mentioning Jesus.

The only accounts of the resurrection are to be found in the four gospels, which are proved by modern scholarship to have been compiled from traditions,

and put in the present form at least a century after the alleged date of the death of Jesus. The earliest writer who alludes to the resurrection of Jesus as a fact, is Paul, who wrote about A.D. 58. He is the only person who says he saw the risen Jesus, and it is clear that he only saw him in a vision. He says that Cephas, James, and all the apostles saw him; but Peter, James, John, and Jude wrote epistles, and make no mention of any such experience. He says he was seen of "above five hundred brethren at once," but this is only hearsay evidence and lacks confirmation. There is no direct testimony from a single person that Jesus was seen by him on earth after his alleged resurrection.

The writers of the Gospels are the only authorities for the occurrence. If they give an inspired revelation, it should be consistent and intelligible, but their stories do not agree. Let any one write out their testimony in parallel columns and he will notice the following discrepancies: Matthew says that at the death of Jesus "the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent; and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that were fallen asleep were raised, and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many." No other writer mentions those astounding events, which, had they occurred, would certainly have become known to the whole world.

As to the time of the visit to the tomb, Matthew says, "as it began to dawn;" Mark says, "when the sun was risen;" Luke says, "at early dawn;" John says, "while it was yet dark."

As to the persons who came to the tomb, Matthew mentions "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary;" Mark says, "Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome;" Luke says, "Now they were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them told these things unto the apostles;" John mentions only Mary Magdalene.

As to the opening of the tomb, Matthew says, "And behold there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came, and rolled away the stone and sat upon it." No one else mentions this manner of opening. Matthew says one angel sat upon the stone outside the tomb; Mark says one sat in the tomb on the right side; Luke says two stood in the tomb; John makes no mention of angels at this time, but says that on a second visit Mary saw two angels sitting in the tomb. Matthew, Luke, and John say the women told the disciples; Mark says, "they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid."

As to the number, time, and place of the appearances of Jesus they all differ. The first appearance is said by Matthew to have been to "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary;" by Mark, "to Mary Magdalene;" by Luke, "to two of them going that very day to a village called Emmaus;" by John, "to Mary at the tomb." Matthew mentions only one other appearance, in Galilee at a mountain; Mark mentions two, one of them near, the other in Jerusalem; Luke mentions one in Jerusalem; John mentions three, two in Jerusalem and one at the Sea of Tiberias. The writer of the Acts says he appeared unto them

"by the space of forty days." Paul speaks of six appearances—none of them to women—and one of these was his own vision after the ascension.

As to the ascension, only one of the four evangelists, Luke, mentions it; but a later writer has added an account to the gospel of Mark, to supply so glaring a deficiency; but he speaks of it as though it occurred from Jerusalem, while Luke says, "over against Bethany," and the writer of the Acts says it took place "from the mount called Olivet."

This is the evidence on which belief in the resurrection rests. It is so contradictory that no court of justice would accept it even if given by professed eye-witnesses. But the evidence is entirely of a hearsay character and merely amounts to this, that theologians say, that evangelists say, that others say, that they saw Jesus alive after he was buried. Only one witness at the grave says "he is arisen," and that one was an angel. Thus we rest our belief in the resurrection upon the fact that somebody says, that somebody says, that somebody said, that an angel said "he is arisen." Angel stories are not deemed final authority in this age, but are considered sure evidence of myths. Is it possible that a miracle upon which the salvation of the world depends would not have been supported by clearer evidence?

But the fact of its belief is by some considered evidence of its truth. Then may all the marvels of Buddhism and Mohammedanism be true. It is asked, how could such a story arise if Jesus never arose from the dead? Read John Fiske's "Myths and Mythmakers," and S. Baring-Gould's "Legends of Patriarchs and Prophets," and "Myths of the Middle

Ages," and it will be seen how legends and folk-lore are born and grow. Read Kersey Graves's "Sixteen Crucified Saviors," and see how every nation has similar legends, and how Chrishna, Zoroaster, Æsculapius, Adonis, Bacchus, and Hercules were forerunners of Jesus. The Pagans celebrated the resurrection of their gods at Easter. Christians have merely added a new name to the deity.

Other explanations have been offered. Possibly Jesus did not die by the crucifixion. He was only from four to six hours on the cross. He may have revived, appeared to a few, and lived and died in obscurity. Possibly imagination, prompted by affection, caused his friends to believe they saw him. Walter Scott thus saw Lord Byron. Modern Spiritualists claim that Jesus was a medium, and was "materialized" after his death. The article "Gospels" in the new Encyclopedia Britannica gives a good account of the probable growth of the gospel traditions, and in "Supernatural Religion" and Greg's "Creed of Christendom" may be seen a good examination of the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus.

If this event is disproved, the whole scheme of Christian theology falls to the ground, and we are rid of the belief that salvation depends upon the acceptance of the story of Jesus. But there still remains the foundation truth which this myth symbolizes, that good ever lives and eventually triumphs over evil; that truth, though for a time vanquished by error, rises again with power.

CREEDS.

CREEDS are expressions of belief. In politics they are called platforms. In love, which is belief in one supreme woman, they are styled declarations. In society they are known as fashions. In religion, the standard statements of the various sects are called creeds.

These concise summaries of religious belief are very useful for the purpose of conveying instruction as to the avowed tenets of an organization, and they are very handy for reference by its members when they have occasion to know what they believe. By this means they can become informed of what are presumed to be their beliefs, without the mortification of applying to their spiritual advisers to give them the instruction. Probably a very small proportion of the professors of religion could give a full account of the tenets, the belief of which is theoretically so important. Though creeds have a use, they are in many respects harmful, for they cause mental slavery and repress free thought. Prof. Francis W. Newman says: "Nowhere from any body of priests, clergy, or ministers, as an order, is religious progress to be anticipated until intellectual creeds are destroyed." Devotion to creeds fosters ignorance by preventing study of those subjects upon which final opinions are pronounced. The creeds of politics,

science, and fashion are not considered unalterable, being only formulations of current opinion, knowledge, or taste; but religious creeds pretend to be statements of divinely revealed truths, and therefore of final authority.

The fatal blow to the claim that creeds contain the ultimate truth, is the fact that there are so many of them. Truth is one, and a divine revelation when it comes will be understood harmoniously. But now we find a great number of religions in the world, and each religion divided into many sects; there being one hundred and forty-six distinct denominations of Protestant Christians in Great Britain, nearly all of which have definite creeds, each sect deeming its own to be infallibly true, and all the rest more or less erroneous. A creed of religion cannot therefore be denied by a professor without his incurring a more serious condemnation from his associates than would be applied to a dissenter from established opinions upon secular subjects. Persons may refuse to believe in protection, in allopathy, or in wearing corsets, and still be respected, but let them deny the creed and they are the victims of social ostracism here and of threatening of suffering in another life. Creeds of fashion have made women squeeze their feet in China and their waists in America; and creeds of religion have compressed their minds. But we need to learn that the creeds of religion, like the creeds of fashion, are only of human authority and may be freely inquired into and discarded if found to be neither true nor useful.

Knowledge of the origin and growth of religious creeds anticipates the mind from any consideration

for their authority beyond the force of merit. The "Apostles' Creed" was composed about four hundred years after the time of the apostles, being compiled from similar earlier statements. The clauses, "he descended into hell," and, "the communion of saints," with some others, are later insertions. The creed grew up with the religion during centuries. The Nicene Creed was composed by the Council of Nicæa, 325 A.D., for the purpose of settling the vexed question whether Christ was of the "same substance" as the Father, or of "like substance." The "Athanasian Creed" was composed in the fifth century, long after the death of Athanasius, to embody his doctrine of the trinity, but it received alteration as late as the ninth century. Constant disputes about beliefs continued until the Council of Trent, in the middle of the sixteenth century, made more elaborate statements of the doctrines which now govern the Romish church. The principal of the multitude of Protestant creeds are the Lutheran, the Calvinistic, the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the Westminster Confession. The latter contains thirty-three chapters, and was composed by a body, chiefly clergymen, who met 1,163 times in five-and-a-half years, from 1643 to 1649 A.D.

The theory of evolution and the establishment of the human authorship of the Bible have overthrown these creeds, and to preserve the organization depending upon them it has been necessary to re-interpret, revise, or remodel them. What is known in New England as the New Congregational Creed is an effort to so change the expressions of the creed as to allow men to hold rationalistic opinions under its

cover, that is, to say one thing and think another. It is said to be meant to find new expressions for the old ideas, and to put new ideas into old expressions. The statements have "grown into new meaning under the brighter light of to-day." It uses old terms, "but shades or expands its definitions so as to accord with the thought of the age."

We rejoice at the liberal tendency shown by these changes, though we may not commend their hypocrisy. Dishonest creeds lead to dishonest deeds; and when the church dissembles its belief it is no wonder that so many of its members confuse their accounts, and the definition of stealing is expanded into borrowing.

It is plain then that creeds are only men's opinions and may be changed as ideas grow. But we need not rail at them any more than at old coaches, all good in their day. We should strive, however, to deliver men from bondage to what is untrue, unseemly, or unprofitable, and make them free to examine all opinions, saying to them,

"And you may foster as you will
Your unbelief in all the creeds,
So that you keep your faith still strong
In the great gospel of good deeds."

RELIGION—IS IT PERMANENT?

THE origin of the word "religion" is in dispute, and the definitions of it are as varied as its forms. A comprehensive definition of it is, adoration of supernatural powers with expectation of benefit. Religion in this sense is universal, and no people have yet been discovered who were entirely destitute of it. Universality proves that it is congenial to man's nature, but does not insure its continuance. Smoking, drinking, and war are universal, but total abstainers and peace men look for their extinction. Religion has doubtless been in a measure beneficial, but in the light of present knowledge it appears illogical, unnecessary, harmful, and doomed to extinction.

Religion is illogical. It is based on second-hand revelation. Samuel should worship if God speaks to him and demands it, but Thomas does right to demand a message by "direct wire" to himself. This acceptance of other people's revelations is the root of all religious delusion. Education destroys supernatural belief, and logic demands that the observances that arose from and depend upon that belief should be dropped. Holyoake remarks that speaking of a thing lessens the performance; the enthusiasm goes off in words instead of in acts. Merchants and artists might as well meet and glorify trade and art

abstractly, singing hymns to commerce and uttering aspirations to beauty; but it is more logical to put the enthusiasm into the work. Knowledge of nature teaches that prayer is illogical; for the course of events is never arbitrarily interfered with. Effect is always preceded by natural cause.

Religion is unnecessary. Men find they can do without it. Its consolations are not effective, nor are its restraints heeded by educated people. A sea captain in a storm said: "There is now no hope but to put our trust in God." An old lady exclaimed: "O Lord! has it come to that?" People now trust in human skill and knowledge. God has never asked for adoration, and cannot need it, and the emotion is more effective for man's benefit, if practically applied.

Religion is harmful. It gives supernatural explanations, and keeps people from looking into things. It has opposed all progress of science that conflicted with its "revelations." Claiming divine authority, it is necessarily intolerant; and, logically, can kill, persecute, or malign those who ignore its claims. It prevents interest in this world by teaching that "religion is the chief concern of mortals here below." It considers the building of churches more important than the construction of drains; the maintenance of priests of more consequence than the provision of schoolmasters and health-officers; the future welfare of the soul of more moment than the present advantage of the body. It inculcates the study of the Hebrew scriptures and the Christian gospels and epistles as divine oracles; thus laying the foundation of sectarianism, and wasting intellect upon the rhapsodies and vagaries of the ancient ori-

ental mind, instead of applying it to the opening of nature's secrets for the advantage of man.

Religion is doomed to extinction. It began in ignorance and fear, and declines coincidently with advance in knowledge of nature. The most ignorant and immoral peoples are the most religious. The degree of intelligence is shown by the distance at which God is placed. The supposed nearness of cause and effect corresponds to the education. The savage believes in immediate divine agency, but knowledge ever discovers new links in the chain of causation. The evolution of religion is shown by Max Müller and other writers to progress through henotheism, polytheism, and monotheism to atheism. Advance in science is coincident with the demand for a natural explanation of the universe. Progress, therefore, demands the abolition of religion, and the analogy of its past course of development points to its extinction.

Religion may continue in name, and we see a great effort now made to interpret it as "morality," "aspiration to the best," "the consideration of man's relation to the universe," thus preserving its existence and vested interests while abandoning its doctrines. But this is not historic religion, nor is it an honest use of the word. As belief in religious doctrines declines, there is evidence of a union of all Christian denominations to combat Rationalism. They no longer can afford to quarrel among themselves, and too many know their minor distinctions to be false; but a struggle for existence is impending. It therefore behooves Rationalists to assume open and uncompromising hostility to religion and its forms.

There will be enough half-way Liberals to remain in the church and reform it from within. But opposition from without is essential to this reform, and all who see the falsity of supernatural religion should act up to their light. The worship of God absorbs a vast amount of thought, emotion, and money that might be directed more profitably to the consideration of the welfare of man. Every lover of humanity should insist that the welfare of man here and now should henceforth be "the chief concern of mortals here below,"

THEISM AND ATHEISM.

THE Hebrews considered the name of God too sacred to be spoken; and even now a mysterious fear of inquiry into the being of God largely pervades the Christian world. But the first cause is as legitimate an object of inquiry as electricity; and modern science is searching the universe for God.

The Psalmist remarks: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." One often meets that kind of an atheist now; a man who, owing to a Christian education, ignorantly thinks that morality depends upon the commands of God, and, in order that he may enjoy congenial immoralities, says in his heart, "There is no God." But, with reference to the existence of a personal supreme being, such as the Bible describes, wise men are now saying in their heads, "There is no God." They find no trace of a personal existence superior to the universe, and though their hearts are in harmony with good, their heads are opposed to God. Their hearts also are opposed to the conceptions of God which seem to violate natural morality; and if any idea of God is to be tolerated, they insist that it shall not be inferior to the current conceptions of good.

Men in all ages have personified their highest conceptions of goodness in a supreme being, making a god to stand for their notions of good. The

Hebrews thus made Yahweh the representative of the best traits they knew, and as they gained knowledge from Greece, Persia, India, and Egypt, they improved his attributes. Christians have made the mistake of continuing this God in the condition in which the Bible writers left him; and as goodness grows with knowledge, and the God of the Bible does not change, we find that their God is inferior to current morality and no longer represents good. It therefore becomes imperative that friends of good should be foes of God. Taking warning from the past, and recognizing that goodness constantly advances, they will no longer personify good in a form that in a short time may be obsolete and a hindrance to progress. It is doubtless a help to many to personify their highest conceptions in a god, just as children personify heroism in Jack the Giant-killer, and virtue and grace in Cinderella; but it marks mental advancement to be able to contemplate goodness abstractly. If men personified present ideas of good as god, it would not be so objectionable; but when they make the goodness of two thousand or three thousand years ago their god, as all do who worship the God of the Bible, then their god is an injury to man.

The chief arguments in support of Theism are universality of belief in God and evidence of design in nature. To the first we reply: Ignorance is also universal, and the effect of knowledge is always to remove God farther away. Where knowledge ends, God begins; and the more ignorant a man is the nearer he brings God to a connection with present events. The explanation of phenomena by the un-

taught is, "God did it;" but science finds immediate natural causes, and now has put God away back of the conception of the plan of evolution. The inference is that as God continually recedes before the advance of knowledge, he will reach a vanishing-point. Napoleon was shocked that Laplace had made no mention of God in the "*Mécanique Céleste*," but the great mathematician replied, "Sire, I have no need of that hypothesis."

The design argument claims that things showing adaptation must have had a maker, therefore the universe has a maker—God. Which we answer by asking, Who made God? It is just as easy to conceive of a self-existent universe as of an eternal God, and the former idea deals with one perplexity less. A boy asked, "Father, how could God make himself when he wasn't made himself yet?" Holyoake speaks of God as "a being who began to be before there was time for anything to be, who was everywhere before there was anywhere to occupy." We further deny that the universe shows design. Darwin says: "The old argument from design in nature, as given by Paley, which formerly seemed to me so conclusive, fails, now that the law of natural selection has been discovered. We can no longer argue that, for instance, the beautiful hinge of a bivalve shell must have been made by an intelligent being, like the hinge of a door by man. There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings and in the action of natural selection, than in the course which the wind blows." Darwin wrote to Dr. Gray: "An innocent and good man stands under a tree and is killed by a flash of lightning. Do you believe that

God *designedly* killed this man? If you believe so, do you believe that when a swallow snaps up a gnat God designs that that particular swallow should snap up that particular gnat at that particular instant? I believe that the man and the gnat are in the same predicament. If the death of neither man nor gnat are designed, I see no good reason to believe that their *first* birth or production should be necessarily designed."

Evolution accounts satisfactorily for progress. All atoms are endowed with consciousness, so far at least as to desire to avail themselves of the most agreeable sensations, *i. e.*, to do the best for themselves. This necessarily tends toward improvement; so that progress is "of the nature of things." Given the existence of matter with the faculty of choice, no interposition of divine guidance is needed to direct the development of the universe. Having now reasonable explanations of things back to the first existence of forceful matter, it seems logical to expect that any preceding operations would be in harmony with all the later methods. We need not, therefore, bring in the hypothesis of a god at this point, but wait in confidence that the growing faculties of man will in time discern the natural causes which have promoted what we now call the beginning of things. New beginnings will then appear for the solution of their origin; and analogy insures the continuance of natural explanations.

Among the evils of Theism may be mentioned the following: As man makes God in his own image, a low conception of the universe is the result. The Hebrew ideas of morality were inferior to those of

the present age, and any god they were capable of creating could not be worthy of entire respect now. Like master, like man; and the worship of an unworthy object degrades the worshiper. Diderot said, "The God of the Bible is a father who cares a good deal for his apples and little for his children." Holyoake styles him "an unsleeping policeman." The idea of God as the author of all events checks inquiry and restricts the growth of knowledge. "God did it" is the answer of ignorance, another way of saying, "Don't know." A little girl, when asked who made her, said, "God made me that long, and I grewed the rest myself." War and intolerance are caused by the belief that one's conception of God is the only true one. More cruelty and murder has resulted from this cause than from any other, unless it be covetousness. The worship of God is a waste of emotion that might be directed to stimulate practical effort for man. It leads to great waste of effort in working for imaginary effects, such as salvation, and substitutes feeling in place of reason, teaching, "Trust in the Lord and lean not upon thine own understanding." It causes a great waste of money. The temple of God and the house of the priest rear their gorgeous structures amid the hovels of the worshipers in the ill-paved, undrained streets. Attention to God means neglect of man. Where God is elevated man is depressed. The conscience is satisfied by the worship of God; and immorality thrives best where the people are the most formally religious. The God idea is the foundation of tyranny and slavery. The heavenly ruler must have his vicegerents on earth. King, priest, and master op-

press humanity by virtue of "God's word," which enjoins obedience to the powers that be. Man will not be free until he escapes from the conception of a being superior to himself. By this imagined authority the king says, Obey or be killed; the priest says, Believe or be damned; the master says, Submit or starve. God, king, priest, and master must give place to the equal brotherhood of man.

Among the benefits of atheism are these: Self-reliance and fortitude in the place of dependence and weakness; work instead of worship; knowledge in the room of faith; investigation and improvement instead of prayer; the elevation of man in consequence of the belief that he is the highest manifestation of natural forces, and that his welfare is the chief concern; the growth of morality by regarding it as what is useful rather than as what is commanded; the strengthening of reason by its exercise as the only guide; the growth of reverence by the substitution of the idea of the evolution of the universe, in place of its ordering by a divine magician. Lord Bacon said: "Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation, all of which may be guides to an outward moral virtue though religion were not; but superstition dismounts all these."

It is the fashion now for men of rationalistic mind to call themselves agnostics and not atheists; for while all equally deny the existence of a personal God, such as is conceived by Hebrews and Christians, it is felt that the existence of an infinite conscious Power is a matter that admits neither of proof nor disproof, and therefore it is wise neither to affirm

nor deny the possibility of what lies beyond the range of man's present mental capacity. In this sense, among educated rationalists, there are no atheists, but all are agnostics; while as regards belief in Jehovah and the Christian God all are atheists.

In a temple at Fuh Chan, where multitudes worship before an idol of the latest and most approved form, there is an anteroom where a thousand images are laid upon the shelf—old forms of gods that have had their day and ceased to be. In another wing of the temple, some years ago, lived an English missionary, who was laboring to supplant the idol by the Christian God. So in the temple of humanity, the gods have been erected, and in turn removed. The Christian God is pushing into the place of Buddha, but in turn is being superseded by the God of Evolution, who must give place in time to still higher conceptions of the mystery of the universe, which, though now unknown, may not be forever unknowable; and in the distant future we see the form of one like the Son of Man, who shall gain dominion over the earth, but it is the form of Enlightened Humanity, whose right it is to reign, and who will put under its feet all gods and every influence that opposes the progress of Naturalism.

To support this progress is to be "an enemy of God." This now opprobrious epithet will become an honorable distinction when men understand that the friends of good must be foes of God.

THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF MORALITY.

MORALITY may be defined as the art of right living; the practice of what ought to be. Its rules and obligations are popularly supposed to be derived from and to rest on the Christian religion. An eminent preacher lately voiced the opinion when he said: "There is no moral foundation in the agnostic creed on which a noble life reposes. Atheists entirely break down when desired to give a basis for morality." If this is true, every Freethinker will say, Let Freethought perish!

What claim has Christianity to be considered the source of moral ideas? Its central dogmas are, that man is a depraved being, condemned by his maker to punishment, which may be escaped by believing that God himself was born of a virgin, suffered, was crucified, and ascended from his grave into heaven. So far from promoting morality, these ideas are all immoral in their tendency. To assure men that they are depraved is to induce them to act accordingly; and to teach them that a life of crime may be atoned for by a death-bed emotion of trust in Jesus, is to remove the strongest safeguard of morality, the assurance of the natural retribution of ill-doing.

But some claim that the precepts of Jesus are the source of our morality. He certainly was largely

imbued with the spirit of morality, but Seneca and Epictetus gave precepts equally elevated. Renan says: "Jesus Christ neither overturned nor discovered anything." Some of his teachings are impracticable, and some of his acts are open to criticism. Indiscriminate alms-giving, voluntary poverty, the cursing of the fig-tree, the whipping of the money-changers, the destruction of two thousand swine, are not in accord with present ideas of morality. The New Testament gives low views of marriage, represses woman, upholds tyranny by preaching submission to "the powers that be," gives but slight intimation of kindness to animals, and attempts to show that when God seemed to care for oxen it was really ministers of the gospel who were the objects of his concern. Infanticide, suicide, and slavery received no condemnation, and worldly learning and physical culture were despised.

The Hebrew scriptures are equally defective as a moral standard. Some of the commandments are inferior to those given by Buddha, which included injunctions against strong liquors, anger, malice, idle and vain talk, and the best of them were known to the world long before Jehovah gave them to Moses. A newspaper that copies from earlier issues is despised. A hint about ether, steam, or electricity, would have been a more convincing proof of revelation than the repetition of ideas known to China, India, or Persia, long before. Many of the Old Testament rules are sentimental or inappropriate. It is not now considered immoral to wear mixed garments, and if Moses had ever eaten a Cincinnati ham he would never have heard Jehovah's edict against pork.

Religion is not the author of morality, for among civilized countries the most religious are the most immoral. Spain, Italy, and Ireland are the most devout, the most ignorant, and the most criminal among modern nations, and suggest that ignorance is the mother both of devotion and of crime.

It is reason, not revelation, that has taught morality. Locke, in his "Essay on the Human Understanding," gives unanswerable reasons to prove that experience is the true source of morals. Bentham shows that utility is the true test of right, "the greatest good of the greatest number," and Spencer maintains that what are called innate ideas, conscience, and "the voice of God in the soul," are inherited ideas secured by the experience of ancestors. Fourier says pain is the sign of error, pleasure the sign of truth. These are sufficient instructors.

That reason and not revelation is the source of morality, is proved by the constant change of moral rules. Clothing, marriage, slavery, food, are regulated by progressive laws of society, and what is moral in one age becomes immoral in the next, and *vice versa*. Men through reason may bridge rivers, tunnel mountains, span continents with railways, and girdle the world with telegraphs, but Christians declare that men could not learn of themselves that it is wrong to kill, steal, and bear false witness. Moses must get a stone from heaven with these rules graven on it, and morality would die if his priestly successors could not support its claims with miracle stories. John Stuart Mill says: "It can do truth no service to blink the fact known to all who have the most ordinary acquaintance with literary history, that a

large portion of the noblest and most valuable moral teaching has been the work, not only of men who did not know, but of men who knew and rejected the Christian faith."

The theory of the rational origin and growth of morality rests upon a scientific basis. Modern research has proved that the embryo of man passes through successive forms common to the animals below him, and the only consistent interpretation of this fact is that in the development of the individual we have the history of the growth of his race. Analogy would suggest that the mental development of each individual shows the manner in which society has grown. We find that the child has no moral rules, but is governed by fear; the youth is controlled by authority; the adult is influenced by reason. Corresponding to this we find that the religion of savages rests upon fear, that of the masses of civilized nations upon the authority of church, priests, and sacred books, while the more highly educated are swayed wholly by reason. Rationalism is, therefore, proved to be the highest order and latest development of mental evolution. These three stages in the growth of morality may be illustrated by the conduct of persons in a park, where is placed the warning, "Keep off the grass." One says, If I go on the grass I shall be arrested and fined. He is restrained by fear. Another says, The law should be respected by all good citizens. He is ruled by authority. A third person says, If I walk on the grass I shall injure the appearance of the park. He is influenced by reason. A fourth, and still higher, stage will be reached when long continuance in

rational well-doing becomes a habit, and men do right as a matter of course. Punishment and the law are useful means of restraint for those who are in low stages of moral development, but they are useless for the more advanced. Some are restrained from ill-doing by fear of hell and God; still more by fear of the policeman; others, without thought, follow the orders of church and state, while the most enlightened believe, with Kant, that duty ought to be done for duty's sake. These last certainly are not the people that Christian ministers should hold up to scorn. It ill becomes those who are under the restraint of the lower motives to rail at those who have the loftier considerations.

Morality may, therefore, be considered to be the current opinion of society as to what course of conduct is most conducive to the general welfare. It has its origin, not in revelation, but in human experience. Gods may be dethroned and religion become extinct, and still men will do what is right, simply because what is right is best. And the sooner men rise above the need of the restraints of fear and law, and are influenced by reason, having for its supreme motive love to man, the sooner will come—not the “kingdom of heaven”—but a righteous earth, without a ruler and without a God.

THE PROMOTION OF MORALITY.

Two things are essential to the welfare of man, knowledge and goodness. If men were learned but not good, knowledge would only be the means for greater oppression of their fellows; and if they were good but not learned, they would remain the victims of natural ills that knowledge might enable them to overcome. Nature's method of advancement seems to be to let knowledge coincide with goodness. Improvements in practical science appear concurrently with development in morals. Explosives, steam, and electricity, if known in barbarous ages, would have been used with disastrous results. Dynamite outrages show the danger from physical knowledge in immoral hands. Advance in goodness or the promotion of morality should receive equal attention with the cultivation of learning.

The first requisite for man's moral improvement is the one generally last thought of—prosperity. Means of existence must be supplied before preaching and tracts can be effective. We should therefore try to solve the problems of capital and labor, co-operation, land reform, and the distribution of wealth, so that one man may not possess a hundred million dollars while a hundred million people are distressed to secure daily bread. Comfort must precede educa-

tion; and leisure is necessary for both moral and mental development.

A second aid to moral improvement is the sure detection of crime. Science is continually promoting this. The press, railroad, telegraph, and photograph assist the search for the criminal, and so perfect is this system in the United States that the only refuge from a present hell is Canada; and this gate it is hoped will soon be closed. New inventions, such as the microphone, which makes audible secret whispers, may assist in the discovery of crime; and if there is truth in the claims made for mind-reading, its development will tend to make discovery so certain that wrong-doing will cease, simply because it can no longer attain its desired ends. Men are immoral, not because they prefer evil to good in itself, but because evil acts promise to secure them the greatest present enjoyment and benefit. When secrecy and concealment are no longer possible, and public opinion discountenances ill-doing, men will find more advantage in being good.

A third means of promoting morality is ethical culture. Let pure modern morals be taught in the schools in place of Biblical instruction. Teach children that morality is wholly independent of theology, and its claims are enforced, not by Sinai, but by usefulness. The Christian declares that morality is the result of a special and exceptional divine revelation through teachers, Bibles, or consciences, whereas the rationalist claims that morality is revealed in the same manner as geology, architecture, ship-building, and every other branch of knowledge, namely, by the toilsome experience of man.

One revelation pervades all nature, and there are no exceptions to the manner of its promulgation. Knowledge is revealed to man when his earnest research and labored experience have found it out. In this way he has discovered what is moral, or, in another word, best, and people need to be taught these results and learn the reasons upon which right-doing rests. When duty appears to them not as a command from the skies, but as the course of conduct most conducive to the welfare of themselves and others, its claims will not need pressing.

Finally, it must be shown that morality pays. Men are eager enough for gain. They will stand day and night before the broker's office to secure shares in a new enterprise. But while morality is deemed the demand of an unseen God, as the price of a far away and intangible blessedness and involving present sacrifice and suffering, it will not have a popular following. Is morality now essential to worldly success? Are our capitalists, our thriving merchants and manufacturers, our prominent statesmen, the men most noted for goodness, and has morality been the pathway to success? No; the whole system of society opposes moral progress. It is based on making profit out of the labors of others without rendering a full return. Each man strives to get more than he gives, and thus store up a surplus either for extra indulgence and display, or for the glory of possession. Of what use is it to preach good-will to others when a man's only chance of a good livelihood is to overreach others in trade? When badness ceases to pay, men will be good. The friends of morality must turn their attention chiefly to such practical changes in society as will make

goodness profitable. A merchant said: "I have made a good record so far, but one never knows what he may have to do for his wife and children." Competition aided by fraud was everywhere pressing against him, and a declining business made him face the possibility of being obliged to adopt the practices that gave other men their gain. Remove this pressure by a change that shall make a man's prosperity depend upon his usefulness and good-will to others, instead of as now upon his powers to outwit, supplant, deceive, and trample down his fellow in the struggle for existence, and we shall then see the spread of morality without ministers and the reign of goodness without God. When men combine to work together for mutual benefit, the moral sentiments, being found to be the most useful, will become the prevailing habit.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

THE observance of a periodical day of rest is almost universal, and its origin is obscured beyond the dawn of history. Akkadian inscriptions show that it was known before the time of Abraham, and is not of Hebrew origin. Josephus and other Jewish writers admit that the week was common to all oriental nations. Every day in the week has been observed as a rest or sacred day; Sunday by Christians, Monday by Greeks, Tuesday by Persians, Wednesday by Assyrians, Thursday by Egyptians, Friday by Turks, and Saturday by Jews. So universal a custom indicates a human need, and the beneficial effect of a rest day was never more fully acknowledged than in the busy whirl of the ending nineteenth century.

But differences of opinion exist as to the proper way of observing the rest day; and an attempt is now being made to revive and fasten more firmly upon Sunday some of the observances of the Jewish Sabbath, on the ground that the law of the Sabbath, as purported to have been given by God to Moses, is binding upon the present generation on the first day of the week.

This claim is believed by many to be unscriptural, unchristian, and unreasonable. It is unscriptural, for in the Old Testament it is always the observance of the seventh day that is enjoined, and there is not

a word in the New Testament that authorizes its change to the first day. Jesus was regarded as a Sabbath breaker. Paul refused to insist on the Sabbath being kept, and was "afraid of" those who observed it. The first day of the week is mentioned only twice as a time of assembly, and the term Lord's day is only used once, and is thought by many to mean the day of the Lord. It is said that the reputed resurrection of Jesus on Sunday furnishes a reason for changing the Sabbath to that day, but there is not a word of scripture to this effect.

The observance of Sunday as the Sabbath is unchristian. The early Christian fathers did not recognize the day in that light, and though their writings contain great lists of faults, no allusion is made to neglect in observing Sunday as a Sabbath, nor is it anywhere enjoined. In the second century Justin Martyr wrote in his controversy with Trypho, the Jew, "You see that the heavens are not idle, nor do they observe the Sabbath;" and he says of Sabbaths, "There is no need of them since Jesus Christ;" and he speaks of the custom as "weakmindedness." Irenæus, Clement, Tertullian, Origen, and others, spoke against Sabbath observance. It was not sanctioned till 321 A.D., when Constantine gave the edict, "Let all judges and inhabitants of cities and all craftsmen rest on the venerable day of the sun. But countrymen may freely and lawfully attend to the cultivation of the fields, lest by delay the opportunity granted by the favor of heaven should be lost." Through the middle ages the day was kept with great laxity, and the reformers strongly opposed the sabbatical idea. Luther said: "If, anywhere, the day is made

holy for the mere day's sake ; if, anywhere, any one sets up its observance on a Jewish foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to feast on it, to do anything to remove this encroachment on Christian liberty." When John Knox visited Calvin on Sunday afternoon, he found him playing at bowls. The enforcement of the Sabbath was opposed by John Milton, Richard Baxter, John Bunyan, Jeremy Taylor, Dr. Paley, Archbishop Whately, and many other distinguished members of the Christian church. The first Sunday laws were enacted in England during Queen Elizabeth's reign [1558], and their rigorous enforcement suited the disposition of the Puritans, who, Macaulay says, "hated bear-baiting not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators." He says: "In defiance of the express and reiterated declaration of Luther and Calvin, they turned the weekly festival, by which the church had from the primitive times commemorated the resurrection of our Lord, into a Jewish Sabbath." In 1595, Mr. Bound published a book maintaining that the Mosaic law of the Sabbath was applicable to Sunday. The idea suited the fanatical temperament of the age, and in 1643 the Sabbath doctrine was adopted into the Westminster Confession of Faith. It is only in English-speaking countries that the doctrine has gained ground, and an overwhelming mass of testimony shows that it is unsupported by the faith and practice of the historic church and its founders, and is therefore unchristian.

It is unreasonable. The Sabbath rests on the statement that God made the world in six days, and rested the seventh. Every scholar knows that this

statement is false ; its deductions are therefore unwarranted. It is absurd to prescribe the same form of rest for all. The man who works his brain all the week needs physical labor on Sunday. The outdoor laborer may do well on Sunday to rest his body and exercise his brain. The toilers in workshops, stores, and mills, need the country air and sunshine. "Means of grace" are not limited to churches, but on the sunny lawns and in the shady groves of the park, on the breezy brow of the mountain, by the roaring waves of the sea, or on the placid lake, nature gives inspiration to every aspirant after physical and mental improvement, and there no sexton can close the windows and poison the lungs, and no preacher of false dogmas can depress the mind.

The distinction between secular and sacred is harmful. All days are equally holy, and man's welfare should be paramount in all. Instead of limiting his rest, we would extend it. Toiling from twelve to sixteen hours a day, and then a total release for a day, is not a wise arrangement, nor does it give enough rest and leisure for man's welfare and best development. Short hours of labor must be secured for all, and a rest day when every form of true recreation may be available. Excursions to the country at cheap prices must be arranged ; libraries, museums, art galleries, and lecture halls must be opened. It is unreasonable to close all means of secular instruction and diversion on the workingman's only day of leisure. The reform is being carried out with admirable results in many cities. Libraries, museums, art galleries, and kindred institutions should be open on Sunday. Is God's ear better pleased with the

clang of church bells than with the music of the band; or is man more elevated by the former than by the latter? Everything good for man should be tolerated on Sunday. "Good deeds have no Sabbath." The refreshment of the body and the cultivation of the mind are good deeds, and no day is too holy for their exercise. Men must be free to go to church or anywhere else on Sunday, as judgment and inclination might dictate. The Lord's day must become man's day in fulfilment of the words of Jesus, "The Sabbath was made for man." Those who have to work on Sunday for the benefit of their fellows, should enjoy another rest day. We should all unite to preserve a day of rest in seven, and to secure a larger amount of leisure and more rational use of it.

The ministers cannot be blamed for adopting the spirit of the national policy and protective tariff, and endeavoring to suppress any and all competitive attractions and rivals to the church; they are only acting as enterprising manufacturers and business men are doing, but the people have a right to say whether they will tolerate this monopoly, and if they find it is not supported by Scripture, but that the texts quoted by ministers all refer to the Jewish Sabbath; if they learn that the Christian church has in the past opposed turning Sunday into a Sabbath, and if they realize that reason dictates diversity of recreation, and liberty demands freedom of choice, they will demand the sweeping away of all Sunday laws and allow common sense to decide what is the best use of Sunday for each and all.

ANCIENT MORALITY.

It is often assumed that, apart from Christianity, there is no morality, and that we are indebted to the teachings of Jesus for what are termed "Christian virtues."

A review of the teachings of ancient moralists shows that no nation has any monopoly of goodness or of moral ideas, and that the division of the world into Christian and heathen, as implying the moral and the immoral, is unwarrantable.

A few quotations may be serviceable to show the unity of opinion about general morality in all nations and times, and to prove that the revelation of goodness is not confined to any peculiar people, but is the reward of every student of nature.

Rig-Veda-Sanhita, 1500 B.C. "His path is easy and without thorns who does what is right." "To the giver thou givest."

Manu, 1200 B.C. "There are two roads that conduct to perfect virtue—to be true and to do no evil to any creature." "Where women are honored, there the deities are pleased; but when they are dishonored, then all religious acts become fruitless."

Zoroaster, 1200 B.C. "Your only savior is your deeds." "Give me, O God, the two desires to see and to self-question." "Let us be such as help the life of the future."

Arthava Veda. "Truth which is mighty, righteousness which is strong, consecration and dedication to holiness, sustain the world."

Buddha, born 622 B.C. "Never will I seek nor receive private individual salvation, never enter into final peace alone, but forever and everywhere will I live and strive for the universal redemption of every creature throughout all worlds. Until all are delivered, never will I leave the world of sin, sorrow, and struggle, but will remain where I am." "A man who foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me." "If anything is to be done, let a man do it; let him attack it vigorously."

Lao-tze, 604 B.C. "Virtue in its grandest aspect is neither more nor less than following reason." "Recompense injury with kindness."

Confucius, 551-479 B.C. "What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others." "While you are not able to serve men, how can you serve the gods?" "A man should not be concerned that he has no place, he should be concerned to fit himself for one." "Acknowledge thy benefits by the return of other benefits, but never return injuries." "Recompense injury with justice, and return good for good." "Who lay up goodness have gladness, who lay up evil have sadness."

Thales, 643-548 B.C. "Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing." "Know thyself."

Solon, 638-558 B.C. "Make reason thy guide."

Pittacus, 570 B.C. "Whatever you do, do it well." He wrote the "Golden Rule."

Cleobulus, 571 B.C. "Love your enemies." "Avoid excess."

Chilo, 542 B.C. "Honest loss is preferable to

shameful gain." "Think before you speak." "Never ridicule the unfortunate."

Socrates, 469-400 B.C. "True felicity is not to be derived from external possessions, but from wisdom, which consists in the knowledge and practice of virtue." "The honest man is alone happy."

Aristippus, 365 B.C. "Prefer labor to idleness, unless you prefer rust to brightness." "Friendship is reciprocal benevolence, which inclines each person to be as anxious for another person's welfare as for his own." "Young people should be taught those things which shall be useful to them when they become men."

Democritus, 470-361 B.C. "It is criminal not only to do mischief, but to wish it." "He who subdues his passions is more heroic than he who vanquishes an enemy." "Do nothing shameful though you are alone." "Every country is open to a wise man, for he is a citizen of the world."

Epicurus, 341-270 B.C. "To be impious is not to take away from the illiterate the gods which they have, it is to attribute to these gods the opinions of the vulgar."

Euripides, 400 B.C., made a player say, "I swore with my mouth, but not with my heart." Socrates was so offended that he left the theater, and the poet was tried for suggesting the utterance of falsehood.

Cicero. "Promote the happiness of one another." "Love the public good."

These few extracts show parallels to all the moral maxims of Jesus, and are in no wise inferior in spirit. An extensive collection of wise sayings of the ancients may be found in Conway's "Sacred Anthology."

WHAT HAVE UNBELIEVERS DONE FOR THE WORLD?

THIS question has been repeatedly hurled from the pulpit in a tone implying that the answer must be—"Nothing."

The saying attributed to Jesus, "By their fruits ye shall know them," is a wise maxim, and it behooves those whom Christians style unbelievers to show that rationalistic opinions are justified by their results. If they fail to show that the views they support have been beneficial to those who hold them and to the world at large, they leave ground for the imputation that these ideas are false, for what is true is useful.

The term, unbeliever, as used by the clergy, means one who denies that the Bible is the word of God, or a revelation in any sense that may not be applied to other writings, and who, therefore, does not accept its teachings as necessarily true. They are often called opponents of the Bible, but they are no more so than they are opponents of Homer, Æsop's Fables, or Mother Goose. They accept what appears to be true in all literature, and oppose what is proved to be false. Belief in the inspiration of the Bible has compelled the support of all its statements, for, as Renan says, "In a divine book everything must be true. It must have no contradictions." As the

Bible is merely a record of human opinion in earlier ages, it follows that nearly every great discoverer has been deemed an opponent of the Bible. If we, therefore, take the verdict of the church as to the promoters of progress, we shall reply to the question—What have unbelievers done for the world?—Everything!

For a thousand years the world lay dormant under the spell of belief in revelation, but observation of nature gradually awoke doubt and dissent. Copernicus discovered the present system of astronomy, but dying a few hours after his book was issued, he escaped the persecution commenced by the Christian church against all who held that the world moved, and thus were unbelievers in the Bible. Giordano Bruno, who espoused this theory and proclaimed it over all Europe, even to the University of Oxford, was burned to death under the walls of the Vatican. Galileo, with the telescope, gained proof of the movement of the earth, but after braving Christian persecution, imprisonment, and perhaps torture, he was forced to pronounce publicly and on his knees his recantation: "I, Galileo, being in my seventieth year, being a prisoner and on my knees and before your examiners, having before my eyes the holy gospels, which I touch with my hands, abjure, curse, and detest the error and the heresy of the movement of the earth."

Galileo's persecution repressed the expressions of Descartes and other unbelievers in Bible science, but Campanella, the seven times tortured, wrote an apology for Galileo, and Vanini, who taught the new knowledge, was killed by the church. Kepler

proclaimed his three laws of planetary motion, and in spite of Romish curses and Protestant persecutions, he maintained his views, and wrote to his adversaries, the believers in the Bible, "Ye would prohibit the promulgation of the true system of the structure of the universe." Newton followed, and confirmed the Copernican theories. Leibnitz, the German philosopher, said, "Newton has robbed the deity of some of his most excellent attributes, and has sapped the foundation of natural religion." But the evidence had now become too strong to be resisted, and Christians decided that the Bible was not inspired about astronomy.

Men next began to doubt the truth of Bible geology. In the sixteenth century Fracastoro and Palissy, the famous potter, said that fossils proved the great age of the world. Those who adopted this opinion were pronounced "opponents of the Bible," and their books were destroyed. Buffon, the French naturalist, published views, now generally accepted, as to the formation of continents, but the Parisian Faculty of Theology compelled him to recant and say, "I abandon everything in my book respecting the formation of the earth, and generally all that may be contrary to the narration of Moses." In the present century, believers in the Bible have assailed the most eminent geologists as "infidels," "impugners of the sacred records," and "assailants of the volume of God." Hugh Miller, unable to reconcile the Bible with facts, sought refuge in death; but Sir Charles Lyell braved the Bible and the church, and founded modern geology; and now Christians tell us "The Bible was not written to teach geology." But these

concessions are only made when the battle is won; until then the supporters of the Bible are the opponents of progress and term its promoters unbelievers.

The early chemists were treated by believers as sorcerers, and struggled against the prejudices excited by belief in the Bible. Roger Bacon, who made known the composition of gunpowder, and invented the magnifying glass, was interdicted by the pope from teaching in the university, and suffered imprisonment; and even as late as the last century, Joseph Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen, and of whom Professor Huxley says, "the number of discoveries that he made was something marvelous," was driven from England by religious bigotry.

Surgery was prohibited by the church of Rome; and many of the noted men who have promoted knowledge of anatomy have been treated with obloquy and persecution by believers. Unbelief has become so identified with this branch of science, that a proverb says, "Where there are three doctors, there are two atheists." Anesthetics were opposed as impious, but the objection was answered on Bible grounds by Sir James Young Simpson, who called attention to the story of the first surgical operation. Before Jehovah took the rib out of Adam, he caused a deep sleep to fall on him.

A large proportion of the eminent names in modern science are those of men who have been termed unbelievers. From the Freethinker, Franklin, to the Agnostic, Huxley, a long roll of names represent rejecters of revelation. Galton has ascertained that among English men of science only two in ten have any religious bias, and not many actively accept

revelation; and that out of six hundred and sixty names on the council lists of scientific societies, only sixteen are clergymen. It is well known that many of the great inventors of the age, like the most eminent of all, Edison, are unbelievers.

In philosophy and literature, from Descartes to Spencer, many of the brightest names are those that have been denounced by believers. Among them we may recall those of Spinoza, Montaigne, Bolingbroke, Mirabaud, D'Holbach, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Matthew Tindal, Thomas Hobbes, Anthony Collins, Hunter, Gibbon, Volney, Voltaire, Paine, Goethe, Madame Roland, "George Sand," Harriet Martineau, Carlyle, George Eliot, Dr. Draper, Max Müller, Holyoake, Mill, Darwin, and Spencer. Do we need to ask, What have these done for the world? Even one who has made the world laugh, as the unbelieving "Mark Twain" has done, may be accounted a benefactor. In poetry we have Burns, Byron, Shelley, Emerson, and Longfellow ranking among unbelievers.

Among statesmen and reformers we have Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Garibaldi, Mazzini, Garrison, Sumner, Phillips, and other leaders in the anti-slavery movement. Woman's suffrage was first agitated by Freethinking women, and now that it is winning its way Christians are espousing it. "Infidels" have ever been leaders in reform.

Among many philanthropists, unbelievers in the Bible, who have donated large sums of money, we may note Robert Owen, who gave half a million dollars to promote education and coöperation; Peter B. Brigham, who gave three millions for a hospital; Stephen Girard, who gave six millions for education;

James Lick, who gave a million for science ; Peter Cooper, who gave three millions for education ; Smithson, who founded the Smithsonian Institution at Washington ; Seybert, Maelure, and Redmond. Unitarians have been foremost in humanitarian work, and the names of Channing, Martineau, and Parker will ever be honored for their advocacy of human rights and good works.

This brief sketch shows that many of the world's benefactors have been called unbelievers, but we might consistently claim that all advance is due to the principle of unbelief. The progress of mankind depends on investigation of phenomena and diffusion of knowledge. Skepticism is necessary to secure this. Doubt is the father of knowledge. Liberty to examine is the idea of Freethought. The authority of a church or a Bible is fatal to this principle.

We might retort, What have believers done for the world? We might say that almost every scientific advance or social reform has been opposed by Christians. We could mention that when the art of printing was discovered, the Bishop of London said, "We must in some way destroy this infernal art, or it will some day destroy us." We could quote John Bright, who said, "The bishops of the church of England have seldom aided legislation in the interest of humanity ;" Macaulay, who says, "The church of England for a hundred and fifty years was the steady enemy of public liberty ;" Lange, who says, "Education and enlightenment, as a rule, go hand in hand with the decrease of the clergy ;" Spencer, who says, "But for science we should still be worshipping fetishes." Believers have been so concerned with a

future world that they have left the improvement of this world to unbelievers. If the question is to be settled by counting heads, unbelievers have nothing to fear.

But when the question is rightly interpreted to mean, Is progress best promoted by adherence to traditional authority or by free inquiry? then common sense joins with universal experience to proclaim that unbelief in the finality of old customs or established opinions is essential to all advance. When asked, What have unbelievers done for the world? we may fitly answer, They have shown that all improvement arises from unbelief in revelation upon any topic. Where revelation begins, inquiry ends. A man who believed that God had revealed the true system of road-making, or ship-building, or science, or religion, would never dare to think of improving either. But the skeptic would not be deterred from advance. The theory that the Bible or the church has final knowledge upon any subject has been the greatest drawback to progress. The forward march of the world follows the vanguard of unbelief.

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION.

THE countries where the highest civilization prevails are known as Christendom. It is therefore asserted that the Christian religion is the cause of civilization. This is a most important question, because our best way of learning how to promote progress in the future is to find out what has been the chief means of its advancement in the past. All that is distinctive in Christianity is the doctrine that the salvation of men from punishment after death depends upon belief in the God-man Jesus. Its other dogmas are common to older religions, and its approved ethics are merely restatements of universal morality.

If the advancement of society depends upon belief in Jesus, we should expect the evidence to be apparent in every community where this creed exists. But Abyssinia has had Christianity for fifteen hundred years, and is one of the most degraded nations. Italy, Spain, Ireland, and French Canada are the most Christian nations. Are they the most enlightened? Other Christian countries, such as Armenia, Russia, and Greece, have made but little progress; and Mexico, South America, and the Philippine Islands, that have enjoyed the influences of Christianity for a long time, are chiefly engrossed by tumults and cock-fighting.

For sixteen centuries Christianity had opportunity to show its power in Europe, but it was only when the printing-press got to work and scholars circulated a knowledge of the laws of nature that society made any marked or rapid advance. The most progressive countries are those where the principle of free inquiry has modified Christianity. Skeptical Germany is in the forefront of progress, and as England, France, and America escape from the trammels of ecclesiasticism, just so fast do their institutions improve.

The history of reform legislation in England completely refutes the claim of Christianity as a civilizer. The prelates of the English church are legislators, and their application of religion to politics is a fair test of the question. In the House of Lords they have joined with the peers in opposing nearly all the great reforms of this century. In 1807, they rejected the education bill, and down to the present have bitterly opposed free education and the board schools. In 1810, they rejected the bill abolishing the death penalty for stealing goods worth five shillings; and in 1839 they continued the death penalty for sheep-stealing. In 1825, they rejected the Catholic relief bill. They denied rights to the Jews until 1858. Twenty-one bishops assisted in rejecting the reform bill in 1831. For thirty years they prevented the protection of miners and opposed many factory acts. They have fought all efforts to extend suffrage; have refused justice to Ireland; refused to legalize marriage with a deceased wife's sister; opposed life peerages and reform of the House of Lords; rejected the army purchase bill, and the bill for the housing

of the poor; refused to amend burial laws or to abolish church rates; opposed affirmation bills and abolition of university tests; rejected the bill taking the tax off paper, which meant a cheap press. But to enumerate their misdeeds would be to mention almost every advance that society has made. Their obstructive conduct arises from the fact that they have taken the customs, morality, and dogmas of ancient peoples to be of divine obligation at the present time. The Christian religion and its enforcement of the authority of the Bible is the cause of all these evils.

Every advance in learning beyond the knowledge of the Hebrews has been assailed by Christians as blasphemy. They opposed Copernicus, burned Bruno, imprisoned Galileo, tortured Campanella, killed Vanini, denounced Kepler, Newton, and Priestley; and all the scientists and reformers of this century have had to encounter attacks from believers in the Bible.

Modern progress is coincident with the advance of science. It is knowledge of nature, not belief in God, that has elevated mankind. The compass, the printing-press, steam, electricity, inventions and arts, have become the servants of man, and have done more for his advancement in three centuries than prayers and faith in Jesus accomplished in fifteen centuries preceding. If the teachings of Jesus and the apostles had been heeded, there would always have been submission to "the powers that be," who "are ordained of God;" the revolutions in England, America, and France would never have taken place, and the world would have been groaning under the

thralldom of kings and priests in a far greater degree than at present. Jesus taught non-resistance and the turning of the cheek to the smiter, but all the nations promote civilization by the sword.

Early Christianity opposed the culture of Greece and the science of Egypt. Libraries, schools, observatories, and laboratories were put under the ban and destroyed, and Christianity is largely to blame for the ten centuries of ignorance that followed. We are indebted to the Mohammedans for the preservation of learning during this period and its introduction into Spain, where, however, Christianity again crushed it. Learned writers have shown that priority is due to the Buddhists for the establishment of hospitals, and to the Mohammedans for the founding of insane asylums. Almshouses existed among the Chinese long before the time of Christ. Rome and Greece cared for the poor, the sick, and the aged.

It is true that in the most civilized countries the Bible is read, but it is also true that they are all in the temperate zone and that their inhabitants are mainly of the so-called Caucasian race. Christianity cannot be the essential cause of progress, for observation shows that social advance is coincident with the decline of "faith." It is as men gain freedom of thought and liberty of action that knowledge increases and society improves; but supernatural religion is opposed to this development. Men must be emancipated from these beliefs; and under the reign of reason prosperity and happiness will flourish and endure.

THE SECULAR NEW YEAR.

MANY of us remember the Christian New Year of our youth. The solemn sermon on the last Sunday of the year—"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved;" the frantic effort to "become a Christian" before the new year; the watch-night prayer-meeting, waiting till the midnight bell tolled, the New Year was ushered in, and the awful question arose, "Does it find my soul redeemed or am I still a lost sinner?" the New Year's written resolutions—to pray, to read the Bible, never to speak ill of any one, not to be angry; the utter failure at the end of a week; the despair of salvation; the growing indifference, until the next revival effort in the church or another New Year. What orthodox child has not had some such experience in "the good old times" of religion, faith, and God, now happily fading into the better day of science, reason, and good.

There is doubtless profit in the use of set times for retrospect of our lives, examination of our purposes, and resolves as to future effort, and the New Year is an appropriate season for it. Secularism permits all that is good in this custom, but banishes the fear of hell, the morbid conscience, the waste of emotion, the misdirected effort. It teaches—learn from the past how to do better and be better in the future;

brood not over mistakes and misfortunes, but having learned their lesson apply it to making your life successful. It gives the cheer of knowing that there is no arbitrary interference with the course of events either by a wrathful God or a chastening father, but that cause and effect pursue their unhindered way, and it is only a question of man's knowledge or ignorance as to in what degree events shall be benefits or injuries. The Christian has always the dread before him that God, in fierce displeasure or infinite mercy and loving kindness, may see fit to thwart all his schemes, destroy his property, bereave him of family, and wreck his earthly happiness; but he tries to enjoy the consolation that it will be for his spiritual and everlasting welfare. The Secularist, on the other hand, is free from this element of uncertainty in his calculations. If his plans are well laid, his efforts commensurate, his knowledge sufficient, and his work in accord with nature's conditions, he will succeed and he need not fear that a loving but meddling father will interfere, snatch away the fruits of his toil and give them to some lazy scoundrel who has done nothing to deserve them. If he does fail, it is owing to the limitations of human knowledge; and its lesson is not submission to God and the study of apology for conduct on his part, which, if indulged in by a fellow-man, would be considered mean and cruel, but the misfortune stimulates to a study of its causes and to future efforts to remove the obstacles to human progress, which are solely those that man's conquest of natural forces will overcome.

Christianity is the religion of childhood. Secularism is the faith of manhood. The child begins the

New Year happy in the thought, My father will provide for me in the coming months. The man says, Life is before me ; my character, industry, and intelligence are the means for its development ; I will do my best, and if results are hindered by causes beyond my control, I will accept the inevitable and try again to overcome. Christianity is dependence ; Secularism is self-reliance and fortitude. The child, the slave, the pauper, possess a kind of careless enjoyment ; but the highest happiness comes from successful achievement. Manly effort is better for the individual and for the world than childish, slavish, or beggarly dependence.

Any one who has escaped from Christianity to Rationalism knows that he has gained in cheerfulness. The great bugbear God is no longer a disturbing element in his orbit, the horror of a hell into which his amiable but heretical fellows are being plunged yearly by millions has vanished, an eternal world is deferred consideration until its existence is proved ; and thought and purpose are concentrated upon present effort and earthly hopes. The Christian sometimes says, I will not give up my religion until you can give me something better. There it is, good instead of God ; natural consequences in place of heaven and hell ; manly self-reliance instead of childhood and pauperism ; hopefulness for the human race ; fellowship with all men, regulated only by personal worth and attainment, not determined by divine election ; a belief in natural forces in place of supernatural fancies ; escape from gods, angels, devils, witches, ghosts, and miracles ; reason in place of superstition ; sense instead of nonsense ; knowledge in lieu

of ignorance ; freedom of thought as a substitute for mental slavery. Who would live in the mediæval huts of Christianity when he may inhabit the modern palace of Reason, founded on the rock of Naturalism, adorned with Knowledge, and surrounded by the fields of Freedom ?

The celebration of a New Year's Day is a custom of great antiquity and was generally an occasion of festive rejoicing. The early Christian fathers—Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, and others—"prohibited in Christian use all festive celebration, and, on the contrary, directed that the Christian year should be opened with a day of prayer, fasting, and humiliation." It is said that we are indebted to that "great monarch and great man," Julian the Apostate, for the promotion of the festive celebration of the day, and the Fathers did not succeed in wholly extinguishing its joys with their "most holy religion." Let us then enter on the New Year with exaltation instead of humiliation, with feasting instead of fasting, and with work instead of prayer ; and in its days and months let our aim be to preserve the cheerfulness that comes of hopefulness, the contented mind that is a continual feast, and the diligent use of opportunities for our own advancement and the world's benefit ; and so we shall find in Secularism—a Happy New Year.

THE
 NEW
 YEAR
 1888



B. F. UNDERWOOD'S WORKS.

Essays and Lectures. Embracing Influence of Christianity on Civilization; Christianity and Materialism; What Liberalism offers in Place of Christianity; Scientific Materialism; Woman; Spiritualism from a Materialistic Standpoint; Paine the Political and Religious Reformer; Materialism and Crime; Will the Coming Man Worship God? Crimes and Cruelties of Christianity; the Authority of the Bible; Freethought Judged by its Fruits; Our Ideas of God. 300 pp., paper, 60 cents; cloth, \$1.

Influence of Christianity upon Civilization. 25 cents

Christianity and Materialism. 15 cents.

What Liberalism Offers in Place of Christianity.
10 cents.

Scientific Materialism: Its Meaning and Tendency.
10 cents.

Spiritualism from a Materialistic Standpoint. 10 cents.

Paine the Political and Religious Reformer. 10 cents.

Woman: Her Past and Present: Her Rights and Wrongs. 10 cents.

Materialism and Crime. 10 cents.

Will the Coming Man Worship God? 10 cents.

Crimes and Cruelties of Christianity. 10 cents.

Twelve Tracts. Scientific and Theological. 20 cents.

Burgess-Underwood Debate. A four day's debate between B. F. UNDERWOOD and PROF. O. A. BURGESS, President of the Northwestern Christian University, Indianapolis, Ind. Accurately reported. 188 pp. Paper, 50 cents; cloth, 80 cents.

Underwood-Marples Debate. A four nights' debate between B. F. UNDERWOOD and REV. JOHN MARPLES. Fully reported. Paper, 35 cents; cloth, 60 cents.

WORKS BY J. E. REMSBURG.

False Claims. Revised and Enlarged. As a Missionary Document it is unexcelled. Among the subjects considered by Mr. Remsburg are: The Church and Morality; Criminal Statistics, showing the creeds of the prisoners in the penitentiaries; the Church and Civilization; the Church and Science; the Church and Learning; the Church and Liberty; the Church and the Antislavery Reform; the Woman's Rights Movement; the Temperance Reform; the Church and the Republic. Price, 10 cents singly; 75 cents per dozen.

Bible Morals. Twenty Crimes and Vices Sanctioned by Scripture: Falsehood and Deception; Cheating; Theft and Robbery; Adultery and Prostitution; Murder; Wars of Conquest and Extermination; Despotism; Intolerance and Persecution; Injustice to Woman; Unkindness to Children; Cruelty to Animals; Human Sacrifices; Cannibalism; Witchcraft; Slavery; Polygamy; Intemperance; Poverty and Vagrancy; Ignorance and Idiocy; Obscenity. Price, single copies, 25 cents; 6 copies, \$1. Special discount on larger quantities.

Sabbath-Breaking. This is the best and most thorough work ever written on the Sabbath from a rational point of view. Large and handsome print. The question is discussed under the following heads: Origin of the Sabbatic Idea; the Jewish Sabbath; the Christian Scriptures and the Sabbath; Examination of Sunday Arguments; Origin of Christian Sabbath; Testimony of the Christian Fathers; the Sabbath during the Middle Ages; the Puritan Sabbath; Testimony of Christian Reformers, Scholars, and Divines; Abrogation of Sunday Laws. Price, 25 cents; six copies, \$1.

Image Breaker. Six Lectures: Decline of Faith, Protestant Intolerance, Washington an Unbeliever; Jefferson an Unbeliever; Paine and Wesley; Christian Sabbath. Each 5 cents; bound, paper, 25 cents; per doz. 40 cents.

Thomas Paine. Tells the story of the Author-Hero's life, delineates the leading traits of his character and genius, and vindicates his name from the aspersions cast upon it. Choice extracts from "Common Sense," "American Crisis," "Rights of Man," and "Age of Reason," are given; also, tributes to Paine's character from more than one hundred noted persons of Europe and America, many of them written expressly for this work. Second edition, 160 pages, printed on fine tinted paper, neatly bound, and containing a handsome steel portrait of Paine. Paper, 50 cts; cloth, 75 cts.

The Apostle of Liberty. An address delivered in Paine Hall, before the N. E. Freethinkers' Convention, January 29, 1884. Price, 10 cents.

For all the above works address **THE TRUTH SEEKER CO.,**
28 Lafayette Place, New York.

APPROPRIATE TO ALL SEASONS!

THE STORY HOUR.

For CHILDREN and YOUTH.

By SUSAN H. WIXON, Conductor of the "Children's Corner"
in the New York "Truth Seeker."

QUARTO (8x10 INCHES), NEARLY THREE HUNDRED PAGES
WITHOUT SUPERSTITION, THE ONLY FREETHINKERS'
CHILDREN'S STORY-BOOK EVER ISSUED. ILLU-
MINATED COVERS. SIXTY-SIX FULL-PAGE
AND TWENTY-FIVE SMALLER
ILLUSTRATIONS.

LARGE TYPE, HEAVY TONED PAPER, BROAD MARGINS.

PRICE (FORMERLY \$1.25), \$1.

—o—

PRESS NOTICES.

A book that is worth every cent asked for it, and more.—[Sociologist.

Will interest, amuse, and instruct at the same time.—[National Equal Rights.

Pleasing, and will stimulate to healthful thought and right endeavor.—[Banner of Light.

"It is just lovely—a perfect jewel. Cannot fail to please everybody, whether of our 'faith' or any other."

Full of beautiful and useful lessons for the young, and too much cannot be said in its praise.—[Winsted Press.

No book of greater beauty, more charming text, or more fascinating pictures could be given to any child.—[John Swinton's Paper.

Entirely original, pure in tone, and well calculated to broaden, lighten, and strengthen the growing mind.—[Rhode Island Pendulum.

A book that should be in every family. We would recommend it above any other book of the kind now known to us.—[Independent Pulpit.

The best Liberal juvenile book ever issued. Freethought families should understand what a magnificent book this is. A valuable intellectual treat for children and adults.—[H. L. Green.

Stirs and stimulates the noblest inspirations of its readers. Every Freethought parent who can possibly pay for it, and does not purchase a copy, will be guilty of injustice to his or her children.—[Freethinkers' Magazine.

Address

THE TRUTH SEEKER CO., 28 Lafayette Place, New York.

THIRD EDITION.

BIBLE MYTHS,

AND THEIR PARALLELS IN OTHER RELIGIONS:

BEING A

Comparison of the Old and New Testament Myths and Miracles with those
of Heathen Nations of Antiquity,

CONSIDERING ALSO THEIR ORIGIN AND MEANING.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.



[Heathen Illustration of the Temptation.]

The *Bundehesh* (a sacred book of the Persians,) states that Ahuramazda after creating the first man and woman, Mashya and Mashyana, bade them "to be humble of heart; to observe the law; to be pure in their thoughts, pure in their speech, pure in their actions." But an evil demon came to them in the form of a *Serpent*, sent by Ahriman, the prince of devils, and gave them fruit of a wonderful tree, which imparted immortality. Evil inclinations then entered their hearts, and all their moral excellence was destroyed. Consequently they fell, and forfeited the eternal happiness for which they were destined. They killed beasts, and clothed themselves in their skins.

Toned paper, wide margins; cloth, 8vo, 612pp., \$2.50.

THE TRUTH SEEKER CO.,

28 Lafayette Place, NEW YORK.

WORKS ON THE LABOR QUESTION.

General Introduction to Social Science. PART I. Introduction to Fourier's Theory of Social Organization. By Albert Brisbane. PART II. Social Destinies. By Charles Fourier. 8vo, 272pp., clo., \$1.

Theory of Social Organization. By Charles Fourier. With an Introduction by Albert Brisbane. 12mo, 544pp., clo., \$1.50.

Fourier's theory is radically misunderstood by the general public, and no true test of it has ever yet been made in practice. These volumes will do much toward furnishing a knowledge of the man and his teachings—*Critical Review*.

Socialism. A Reply to Roswell D. Hitchcock, D.D. By an Independent Socialist. 12mo, 67pp., pap., 25c; clo., 50c.

He blames Dr. Hitchcock that the latter perceives a huge human misery, but neither sees nor seeks any other solution than that the weakest must go to the wall. It is against this passiveness that "Socialist" cries out. Is there no help for the miserable? he asks. The doctrine that government should merely "protect" he attacks, and insists that it should "assist" also. While he does not believe that "property is robbery," or wholly subscribe to "the world owes me a living," he affirms "the world owes me a chance to make a living."—*N. Y. Herald*.

Nathaniel Vaughan. Priest and Man. By Frederika Macdonald. Standard Freethought and Labor Reform Novel. 3 vols. in 1., 12mo, 404pp., clo., gold side and back stamp, \$1.25.

Modern Thinker. (No. 2.) The Most Advanced Speculations in Philosophy, Science, Sociology, and Religion. 8vo, 160pp., pap., 75c.

The Conventional Lies of Our Civilization. By Max Nordau. CONTENTS.—Mene, Tekel, Upharsin; The Religious, Monarchic, and Aristocratic, Political, Economical, Matrimonial, and Miscellaneous Lies; Closing Harmony. 12mo, 364pp., pap., People's edition, 50c; clo., \$1.50

The Imperial Council of Vienna prohibited the sale of this book in Austria, and confiscated all copies of it they could find.

Economic Equities. A Compend of the Natural Laws of Industrial Production and Exchange. By J. K. Ingalls, author of "Social Wealth." Pap., 25c.

Next Step to Progress. Limitation of Wealth. By J. H. Keyser. 20c.

Socialism and Utilitarianism. By J. S. Mill. 12mo, 288pp., clo., \$1.

Fruits of Philosophy. A Treatise on the Population Question. By Dr. Chas. Knowlton. Edited by Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant. 25c.

Poverty: Its Cause and Cure. Pointing out the means by which the working classes may raise themselves from their present state of low wages and ceaseless toil to one of comfort, dignity, and independence, and which is also capable of entirely removing, in course of time, the other principal social evils. By M. G. H. 10c.

Large or Small Families? On which Side Lies the Balance of Comfort? By Austin Holyoake. 5c.

Poverty: Its Effects on the Political Condition of the People. By Chas. Bradlaugh. 5c.

Why Do Men Starve? By Charles Bradlaugh. 5c.

The Land Question. Large Estates Inimical to the Welfare of the People. By Chas. Bradlaugh. 5c.

Labor's Prayer. By Chas. Bradlaugh. 5c.

Letters to Young People. By (Prince) Peter Krapotkin. With Life of Author, by Stepniak. 10c.

The Truth Seeker. Leading Journal of Freethought and Reform. Largest, Cheapest, Best. The Enemy of Superstition; the Friend of Humanity. E. M. Macdonald, Editor. C. P. Somerby, Business Manager. Weekly, Illustrated, Folio 16 pages. Yearly, \$3; Four months, \$1. Sample Copies, Circulars, and Club Terms, FREE.

THE TRUTH SEEKER CO., 28 Lafayette Place, New York.

VOLTAIRE'S WORKS.

Philosophical Dictionary. Complete London Edition, with additional articles, translated directly from the French. Two volumes in one, 876 large octavo pages, and two steel engravings. Cloth, \$4.50; sheep, \$5.

Voltaire's Romances. A New Edition, with Numerous Illustrations.

CONTENTS: The White Bull; A Satirical Romance. Zadig, or Fate; An Oriental History. The Sage and the Atheist. The Princess of Babylon. The Man of Forty Crowns. The Huron; or, Pupil of Nature. Micromegas; A Satire on the Philosophy, Ignorance, and Self-Conceit of Mankind. The World as it goes. The Vision of Babouc. The Black and the White. Memnon the Philosopher. Andre des Touches at Siam. Bababec. The Study of Nature. A Con-



Voltaire.

versation with a Chinese. Plato's Dream. A Pleasure in Having no Pleasure. An Adventure in India.

I choose that a story should be founded on probability, and not always resemble a dream. I desire to find nothing in it trivial or extravagant; and I desire above all, that under the appearance of fable, there may appear some latent truth, obvious to the discerning eye, though it escape the observation of the vulgar.—[Voltaire.]

Price, paper, \$1; cloth, beveled boards, \$1.50; half calf or half morocco, marbled edges, \$4.

Voltaire in Exile. By Benjamin Gastineau. His Life and Work in France and abroad. With Unpublished Letters of Voltaire and Mme. Chatelet. Paper, 75 cts; cloth, \$1.00.

Pocket Theology. Translated from the French by Ellen Carroll. Paper, 25 cents.

Jehovah Unveiled, or the Character of the Jewish Deity Delineated; also Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff. Paper, 35 cents.

The Ignorant Philosopher, and Adventures of Pythagoras in India. Paper, 10 cents.

THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY,

28 Lafayette Place, New York.

INGERSOLL'S WORKS.

ONLY AUTHORIZED EDITIONS.

Principal Works: Gods and Other Lectures; Ghosts and Other Lectures; Some Mistakes of Moses; Interviews on Talmage; What Must We Do To Be Saved? In one vol., half calf, \$5.

Prose Poems and Selections. From his Writings and Sayings. Silk cloth, \$2.50; half calf, \$4.50; half mor., \$5; Turkey mor., \$7.50.

Gods and Other Lectures. Comprising The Gods, Humboldt, Thomas Paine, Individuality, Heretics and Heresies. Paper, 50c.; cloth, \$1.

Ghosts and Other Lectures. Including Liberty of Man, Woman, and Child; The Declaration of Independence, About Farming in Illinois, Speech Nominating Jas. G. Blaine for Presidency in 1876, The Grant Banquet, A Tribute to Rev. Alex. Clarke, The Past Rises Before Me Like a Dream, and A Tribute to Ebon C. Ingersoll. Paper, 50c.; Cloth, \$1.25.

Some Mistakes of Moses. Contents: Some Mistakes of Moses. Free Schools, The Politicians, Man and Woman, The Pentateuch, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, He Made the Stars Also, Friday, Saturday, Let Us Make Man, Sunday, The Necessity for a Good Memory, The Garden, The Fall, Dampness, Bacchus and Babel, Faith in Filth, The Hebrews, The Plagues, The Flight, Confess and Avoid; Inspired Slavery, Marriage, War, Religious Liberty; Conclusion. Paper, 50c.

Interviews on Talmage. Being Six Interviews with the Famous Orator on Six Sermons by the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, of Brooklyn, to which is added A Talmagian Catechism. Paper, 50c.; Cloth, \$1.25.

Ingersoll-Field Discussion. Faith or Agnosticism. Discussion between R. G. Ingersoll and H. M. Field, D. D. Paper, 50c.; Cloth, \$1.

Blasphemy. Argument by R. G. Ingersoll in the Trial of C. B. Reynolds, at Morristown, N. J. Paper, 25c.; Cloth, 50c.

What Must We Do To Be Saved? Analyzes the so-called gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and devotes a chapter each to the Catholics, Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Evangelical Alliance, and answers the question of the Christians as to what he proposes instead of Christianity, the religion of sword and flame. Paper, 25 cents.

Thomas Paine's Vindication. A Reply to the New York *Observer's* Attack upon the Author-hero of the Revolution, by R. G. Ingersoll; together with A Roman Catholic Canard, by W. H. Burr. Paper, 15 cents.

Limitations of Toleration. A Discussion between Col. R. G. Ingersoll, Hon. Frederic R. Coudert, and Ex-Governor Stewart L. Woodford. Paper, 10c.

Orthodoxy. A Lecture. Paper, 10 cents.

Civil Rights Speech. With Speech of Hon. Fredk. Douglass. Pap., 10c.

Opening Speech to the Jury: In the suit of the B. & M. Tel. Co. vs. W. U. Tel. Co., 1886. Paper, 10 cents.

Declaration of Independence. Centennial Oration, together with a copy of the Immortal Document and the National Anthem, Land of Liberty. Paper, 6 cents.

A Lay Sermon. On the Labor Question. Paper, 5 cents.

Stage and the Pulpit. An Interview on their Comparative Merits, and Opinions on the Trial of the Chicago Anarchists, the Catholic Church, etc. Paper, 3 cents.

Ingersoll on McGlynn. Paper, 3c. | **Ingersoll Catechised.** Paper, 3c.

Bible Idolatry. Paper, 3c. | **The Truth of History.** Paper, 3c.

Life. A Prose Poem. In color, on board, beveled, gilt edges, 50c.

Lithograph of R. G. Ingersoll. 22 x 28 inches, heavy plate pap., 50c.

Photograph (Cabinet) of R. G. Ingersoll, 50 cents.

THE TRUTH SEEKER CO., 28 Lafayette Place, New York.

SOCIAL WEALTH:

The Sole Factors and Exact Ratios in its Acquirement and Apportionment.

In proceeding toward any given point, there is always one line which is shortest—THE STRAIGHT; so, in the conduct of human affairs, there is always one course which is best—THE JUST.

BY J. K. INCALLS.

12mo, 320pp., large type, good paper, silk cloth, \$1.

CONTENTS.—Economic Schools—A Brief Review of their Origin and Growth; Rise and Growth of Capitalism; Uneared Increase—Profit, Interest, Rent; Conservation of Wealth; Tools and Improved Machinery; The Nature of Wages; Private and Social Wealth; Land Ownership; Private Property in Land; Capital and the Productive Factors; Partnership and Co-operation; Law of Contracts; Money and Credit; Of Value, or Economic Ratios; Taxation as a Remedy; Reforms, not Remedies; Suggestions to Legislators; Summary of Definitions—Economic and Isomonic.

EXTRACT.—From conquests with bludgeons, swords, and spears, as in the earlier ages, civilism has inaugurated a war of cunning and fraud, whose weapons are technical terms, shrewd devices, class legislation, and forms of law recognizing no rights as supreme but those of property and the law of the market.

EXTRACT.—To get something for nothing becomes a habit and a cultus, which, as a man grows in years, he tries to reduce to an art. If, by shrewd device or subtle pretense, he can wholly escape work, and saddle the expense of life upon others, he learns that, under the teachings of our exact economy and reformed theology, he will be entitled to social distinction and respect, and to have his position defended by learned professor and titled dignitary, both secular and religious.

Shows throughout a complete mastery of the subject.—*Sociologist*.

Very radical in his views. Written with force and evident thought.—*Kansas City Times*.

A work of inestimable value in the new field of thought, and very clearly written.—*World*.

A critical review of the various systems of property and labor in vogue for many ages.—*Altruist*.

A study in political economy, and evinces wide erudition and deep thought.—*Yates Co. (N. Y.) Chronicle*.

All who can should read it, particularly the very wealthy, who are in the greatest danger.—*The Liberal*.

The author evinces a mind free from bias, canvassing the subjects treated with vigor and clearness.—*Truth Seeker* (N. Y.).

The result of profound investigation, careful reading, and deep thought. Embodies the most advanced ideas of economics.—*Washington Post*.

Every workingman should read it, and every thinking man may obtain enlightenment and food for thought from it.—*Easton Labor Journal*.

Takes radical ground and contains matter that not only advanced thinkers, but the public generally, may well consider with care.—*Day Star* (N. Y.).

The argument is directed toward points of investigation which often escape the economist, but which, when settled, serve to make the rest clear.—*John Swinton's Paper*.

Intelligence—an exact and systematized knowledge of the great governing laws of life—he considers to be the only solvent of the great problems of the age.—*Banner of Light*.

One of the best publications on this subject. Able, thorough, and logical. Many of the chapters are remarkable for their depth of thought, and are worth three times the price of the book.—*Sunday Gazetteer*.

The highest praise any book on this subject could receive has been accorded this work, the policy of silence in regard to it having been pursued by nearly all of the capitalistic press.

THE TRUTH SEEKER CO., 28 Lafayette Place, New York.

MEN, WOMEN, AND GODS, AND OTHER LECTURES.

By HELEN H. GARDENER.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By COL. R. G. INGERSOLL.

Published by THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY, 28 Lafayette Pl., New York.
Cloth paper, handsomely bound in cloth, \$1.00; paper covers, 50 cents.

PRESS NOTICES.

[The Chicago Times is one of the most wide-awake and independent newspapers in America. Its daily circulation is 43,000 copies; its Sunday circulation is but a few hundred less than 50,000. The daily edition is never less than ten pages, while its Sunday edition often reaches twenty. Helen H. Gardener may therefore congratulate herself that her book has induced so widely read a journal to give its world an opinion so damaging to the claims of Christianity as the following notice of "Men, Women, and Gods:"]

"Men, Women, and Gods, and Other Lectures," by Helen H. Gardener, is a duodecimo volume of about 185 pages, containing three lectures with an appendix, setting forth some of the authorities from which the lecturer draws some of her material.

The first lecture gives the title to the book, the second is on "Vicarious Atonement," and the third on "Historical Facts and Theological Fictions."

All are keen, vigorous, and acrid attacks on the Christian church forms of theology. They can scarcely be said to be attacks on religion or religious feeling, since the flower of that plant is charity of thought and action, and in this Miss Gardener sees the highest end of man's emotional side, as in absolute freedom of investigation and opinion she sees the highest end of his intellectual side. Her leading purpose seems to be to show that women, of all persons, should least support the Bible and the churches which hold it in reverence.

The first lecture is a surprisingly bitter and scathing denunciation of the Old Testament as the sum of all cruelty and brutality toward women, and she makes up a startlingly strong case from the pages of the book itself. If any one does not think the case can be made strong let him read carefully this book and also the thirty-first chapter of "Numbers."

The second lecture arraigns vicarious atonement as an inexcusable injustice in itself, weakening and corrupting in its influence, like indiscriminate almsgiving, and points out that it is not peculiar to Christianity, but is found in some form in every religious system known in history.

Both these lectures are strong productions, but are disfigured with a good deal of flippant phrasing, designed, no doubt, to catch the popular attention by tickling the popular ear. The lecturer's strongest work is done in the third lecture, where her purpose is to show that our civilization is in no sense based upon Christianity, and that the Christian religion has especially not contributed to the elevation of woman in any respect. Here she drops largely her flippancy of style and settles down to earnest work.

Civilization she holds to be chiefly the creature of environment, the basis of which, in this world, is in climate and soil. In support of her view of the position of woman she quotes largely from Sir Henry Maine, showing among other things that the position of woman in Roman law and usage, before the introduction of Christianity, was in advance of what it is even now in some respects, and that the tendency of the canon (church) law was invariably to force her back into the degradation from which she had been rescued by a long and painful evolution.

In this lecture, too, she answers the questions as to what she would substitute for the sanctions of Christianity, and she takes considerable pains to show, what one would think need scarcely be insisted upon in our day, that the morals of civilization—morals in general, indeed—are not at all based in or dependent upon religion, certainly not on Christianity, since the so-called "golden rule," the highest principle of morality, antedates Christianity a thousand years.

THE TRUTH SEEKER. Leading Journal of Freethought and Reform. Largest, Cheapest, Best. The Enemy of Superstition; the Friend of Humanity. E. M. Macdonald, Editor. C. P. Somerby, Business Manager. Weekly, Illustrated, Folio, 16 pages. Yearly, \$3; Four months, \$1. Sample Copies, Circulars, and Club Terms, FREE.

Paine's Great Political and Theological Works. With Portrait and Life. 1 vol., Octavo, 800 pp. Cloth, \$3; leather, \$4; morocco, g.e., \$4.50. Or, in 2 vols.: Vol. I. **POLITICAL WORKS:** "Common Sense," "Crisis," "Rights of Man." Cloth, \$1.50. Vol. II. **THEOLOGICAL WORKS:** "Age of Reason," "Examination of Prophecies," etc., with Life of Paine and Steel Portrait. Cloth, \$1.50. **AGE OF REASON.** Paper, 25c.; cloth, 50c. **AGE OF REASON AND EXAMINATION OF PROPHECIES.** Pap., 40c.; clo., 75c. **RIGHTS OF MAN.** Answer to Burke's Attack on French Revolution. Pap., 40c.; clo., 75c. **CRISIS.** Written during American Revolution. Pap., 40c.; Clo., 75c.

Supernatural Religion. An Inquiry into the Reality of Divine Revelation. (Said to be written by W. K. Clifford, F. R. S.) The most thorough and exhaustive work on the claims of Supernaturalism ever written. Complete in 1 vol., 8vo., 1115pp. Cloth, \$4; leather, \$5; morocco, g.e., \$5.50.

An Analysis of Religious Belief. An Examination of the Creeds, Rites, and Sacred Writings of the World. By Viscount Amberley. Complete, from London Edition, in 1 vol., 8vo, 745pp. Clo., \$3; leather, \$4; morocco, g.e., \$4.50.

Nathaniel Vaughan: Priest and Man. By Frederika Macdonald. A Standard Freethought and Labor Reform Novel. 12mo, 404pp. Cloth, \$1.25.

The Creed of Christendom. Its Foundation Contrasted with its Superstructure. By W. R. Greg. Complete in 1 vol., 12 no, 399pp. Cloth, \$1.50.

The Old Faith and the New. By D. F. Strauss. 2 vols. in 1, 12mo, clo., \$1.50.

The Martyrdom of Man. A Compendium of Universal History. By Winwood Reade. Sixth ed. 12mo, 544pp. Cloth, \$1.75.

The Order of Creation. The Conflict between Genesis and Geology. A Controversy between the Hon. W. E. Gladstone, Prof. T. H. Huxley, Prof. Max Mueller, M. Reville, J. Lynn Linton. 12mo, 178pp. Pap., 50c.; clo., 75c.

The Reign of the Stoics. Their History, Religion, and Philosophy, and Maxims of Self-Control, Self-Culture, Benevolence, and Justice. By F. M. Holland. 12mo, 248pp. Cloth, \$1.25.

Through Rome, On. A Memoir of Christian and Extra-Christian Experience. By N. R. Waters. 12mo, 352pp. Cloth, \$1.75.

The Christ of Paul. A Critical Study of the Origins of Christian Doctrines and Canonical Scriptures. By George Reber. 12mo, 400pp. Cloth, \$2.

Theology and Mythology. An Inquiry into the Claims of Biblical Inspiration and the Supernatural Element in Religion. By A. H. O'Donoghue. 12mo, 194pp. Cloth, \$1.

The Truth-Seeker Annual and Freethinkers' Almanac for 1885. Thirty-nine Portraits of Prominent American Freethinkers, and other Illus. 120pp, 25c. **THE SAME for 1886.** Thirty Portraits of Distinguished European Freethinkers, Scientists, and Philosophers, and other Illus., 25c.

The Story Hour. For Children and Youth. By Susan H. Wixon. Without Superstition. The only Illustrated Freethinkers' Children's Story-Book ever issued. 66 full-page and 25 smaller Illus. 4to, 224pp., bds., \$1.25.

Men, Women, and Gods, and Other Lectures. By Helen H. Gardener. With an Introduction by Robert G. Ingersoll. 12mo, 180pp. Pap., 50c.; clo., \$1.

The Brain and the Bible. The Conflict between Mental Science and Theology. By E. C. Beall. Preface by R. G. Ingersoll. 12mo., 290pp. Clo., \$1.

THE TRUTH SEEKER COMPANY, 28 La'ayette Place, New York.

Publishers of Freethought and Reform Works.

Full List of Publications sent free.

